WHITTLING DOWN YOUR DOLLAR

by Adam Lapin

NEW MASSES

APRIL 29, 1941

FIFTEEN CENTS

CAPITALISM CONFESSES

The devastating admissions of TNEC. What the reports did not say. By Bruce Minton

SPRING SKY, 1941

A letter from London. By Randall Swingler

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO AMERICA?

Permanent draft, higher taxes, fewer autos. An editorial

Samuel Sillen reviews "Out of This Furnace" and "What Makes Sammy Run?"

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We knew this spring we must raise $25,000 to keep NEW MASSES alive. We have to do that every year.

It is almost May and only $10,012 has come in.

Further delay will mean disaster.

What does NEW MASSES mean to you?

The Editors.

(Please turn to page 26)

WE HAVE on hand and will publish, most probably in the next issue, an article by Julian Webb from Washington on the quiet but firm and swiftly growing censorship of the press by the Roosevelt administration.

The absence of Joy Davidman's movie reviews from last week's issue and this one is due to the author's illness. Miss Davidman's discussion of new film offerings will be resumed shortly.

Paul Robeson, who numbers innumerable fans among NM readers, will sing at a concert of Russian Music given by the American Russian Institute at Carnegie Hall, Tuesday evening, April 29. Benny Goodman and his septet will play Prokofieff's "Overture on Yiddish Themes" and Vytautas Bacevicius at the piano will perform various works by Russian composers. Robeson's part of the program will include folk songs by Moussorgsky, Prokofieff, Dzerzhinsky, Dunaevsky, and Koval.

Who's Who

RANDALL SWINGLER was one of the literary editors of the London *Daily Worker* . . . Adam Lapin is NM's Washington correspondent. . . . Stephen Peabody's reviews have frequently appeared in NM. . . . Leonard Wood is a student of Far Eastern affairs.

Flashbacks

MAY DAY, originating in the eight-hour day movement in Chicago in 1886, became the property of all workers in 1890 when the first international celebration took place. . . . By 1894 May 1 was a symbol of such significance that the army of the unemployed led by "General" Coxey chose to arrive in the nation's capital on that day. . . . Debs in 1907 said of May 1: "This is the first and only International Labor Day. It belongs to the working class."

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NEW MASSES
VOLUME XXXIX APRIL 29, 1941 NUMBER 4

WHAT ARE THEY DOING TO AMERICA?

An Editorial

WHAT kind of America is it that is being shaped in the crucible of war and preparation for war? There are those in our country who prefer to ignore this question; it raises doubts, feeds uneasiness. Significantly, they are the very people who are most clamorous about defending "the American way of life" by plunging the country deeper into war. But for the majority of Americans what is happening to their way of life here and now—in the name of defending it—is of the utmost importance.

That way of life, as it was known up to the outbreak of the war, certainly left much to be desired. Two out of every three American families, according to a government survey, had in 1935-36 an average income of sixty-nine dollars a month, with fourteen percent of the population averaging only twenty-six dollars a month. Under that way of life the threat to American freedom from big business monopoly, which President Roosevelt warned against three years ago, has grown apace, as Bruce Minton makes clear in his article in this issue.

To abandon all efforts to improve this state of affairs, as has the Roosevelt administration, is bad enough. But what if the entire war effort, instead of defending this way of life, actually assaults it? What if the principal effect for the people of this war effort is to encroach still further on their already low standard of living and their limited liberties? Certainly, that is reason enough to question the character of the war. And it is reason enough to consider the possible alternatives before the American people.

In his fireside chat of December 29 President Roosevelt described the terrible consequences of an Axis victory. "To survive in such a world," he said, "we would have to convert ourselves permanently into a militaristic power on the basis of war economy." Last week he urged that America embrace this very evil whether the Axis wins or not. That is the meaning of his proposal for a permanent draft. The treasure and soon perhaps the blood of America are being offered in a war that is supposed to wipe out forever the menace of aggression and establish the "four freedoms" everywhere. Yet President Roosevelt himself has so little faith in his own promises and his own propaganda that he proposes today, before the United States is even involved in the shooting phase, that we build a permanent military machine to prepare to fight the next war! This is the "new order" that Roosevelt and Churchill offer as bait to the millions who hesitate to shed their blood and suffer the horrors and privations of this imperialist conflict.

On the same day that the President advocated permanent conscription, Secretary of War Stimson offered a further insight into what is happening and will happen to the American way of life. To those who may think that our present state is only temporary he held forth the prospect that "this emergency may be very prolonged and that we may have to continue our effort for a long time." And to those who may be so naive as to take at face value President Roosevelt's election pledges he said: "Our forces must be prepared for the possibilities of war in many and varied terrains, it being quite uncertain in what part of North or South or Central America, or even possibly other regions it ultimately may be necessary to use them in the defense of this country and its possessions." This prospect of a "very prolonged" war emergency and of a permanent draft for future wars yet undreamed of has as its corollary a "very prolonged," in fact, permanent militarization of the country's economy. And during the past week there came two more indications of what war economy is doing to the American way of life: the announcement that the auto industry next season will reduce production twenty percent in order to devote a larger part of its facilities to war purposes, and the plans for a thirty-three percent increase in taxes, largely on the low- and middle-income groups. These are momentous developments. The car-in-every-garage slogan of American capitalism under Hoover was a boast whose hollowness was laid bare by the crash of 1929. Yet this country did produce a larger number of automobiles per capita than any nation in the world. Now for the first time plans are made deliberately to restrict the output. This will mean a rise in the price of not only new cars, but used ones as well. And used cars are a necessity for many farmers, workers, and small business men. As in Germany and Britain, the consumer will pay more for less and poorer goods. Only instruments of destruction will multiply. This is the ghastly logic of capitalism in decay.

Occasionally some of the hard-headed businessmen who are behind the administration's war program let us catch a glimpse of the truth about their objectives. "Trade outlets are the cause of most wars," Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones told the Associated Press convention the other day, urging support of the present trade war against Germany. Henry R. Luce, publisher of *Life, Time,* and *Fortune,* talks lyrically of the "four, five, ten billions of dollars a year" that "Asia will be worth to us" if only "we" act to make this an American-dominated century. And the *United States News* of April 25 says bluntly: "This war, basically, is being fought to determine who is to make and enforce the rules for running the world; who to control the seas; who to have the privilege of pushing other people around."

It is for this—that the world may be Wall Street's oyster instead of Hitler's—that the American people are being asked to consent to the Hitlerization of their way of life. But the common folk of America have no desire to yield up everything that makes life worth while and perhaps life itself so that Jesse Jones' friends may have trade outlets and Henry Luce's pals may plunder the peoples of Asia. They have no wish to put their necks under the iron heel of those who will use the other boot to kick the rest of the world around—even if that heel and that boot bear the label "Made in the USA" instead of "Made in Germany." The fascism of Wall Street is no less an evil than that of Berlin. It is much closer to the lives of average Americans.

The people's opposition to the use of any branch of the armed forces in this war is rising—even the Gallup poll records that. According to John O'Donnell and Doris Fleeson in the New York *Daily News,* "there has been a sharp increase in the significant mail to Congressmen from the voters back home demanding assurances from Capitol Hill that this nation doesn't become involved in a 'shooting war' with Germany and Italy." If the spokesmen for capitalism insist that their system requires for survival recurrent wars for trade outlets, for billions in colonial profits, for the subjection of other nations, the American people may take it into their heads that such a system isn't worth surviving. And they would have good reason for doing so since a certain country whose two hundred million people are building a different kind of society manages, despite its physical proximity to the war, to remain at peace.

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CAPITALISM CONFESSES

Bruce Minton discusses the revelations of the TNEC. "The inquiry proves that capitalism is diseased." The reign of monopoly. What the investigators omitted—and why.

FOR some time now, the Temporary National Economic Committee has published reports on different phases of American economy. Though still incomplete, the forty or so monographs available contain an amount of material that can only be described as overwhelming. For three years, a staff of 188 economic experts delved into ninety industries, listened to over 600 witnesses, and pondered 20,000 printed pages of testimony. Never before has the profit system been subjected to such a detailed examination by a capitalist agency. And as the vast compilation of statistics and findings is made public, the results of the government-conducted studies confirm the Marxist analysis that capitalism is senile and decaying. Everything the Marxists have said during the twenty-three years since the end of the first world war is provided further and careful proof.

In the spring of 1938 the popular speeches of Secretary Ickes and the then Assistant Attorney General Robert Jackson attacking monopoly, were climaxed by President Roosevelt's demand for an investigation of "concentrated private economic power which is struggling so hard to master our democratic government." Congress voted the funds; the inquiry, it was predicted by administration supporters, would aid in the prosecution of conspiracies to violate the anti-trust laws. In those days, the New Deal still functioned to some degree, and battle lines were sharply drawn between the President, who on the whole could count on mass support, and the powerful in high places, who violently resented even small concessions to the people.

TIMES CHANGE. With the outbreak of war, the administration took stock. Former disagreements between the liberal capitalists and the die-hards were no longer significant. The hatchet was buried—in the necks of the people. The New Deal underwent a systematic scuttling, and small gains made in the past were steadily negated. Nevertheless, the monopoly investigation continued. To have halted it would have been too crass. By the time its findings appeared this year, government and big business had almost wholly merged.

In that respect, the TNEC reports are another instance of capitalist contradiction. Yet such an appraisal is far too simple. The material itself, revealing as it is, can be considered only the beginning. The use to which the findings are put is all-important.

The monographs so far published deal almost exclusively with industry, discussing only briefly the relation of agriculture to the national economy. They examine the tariff and revenue systems, price discrimination and control, lobbying, trade associations and cartels, profits and policies of the largest corporations, the distribution of individual incomes, taxation, foreign trade, the defense program, problems of small business and consumers. They review the spread of technology in industry and its effects; they discuss wage rates and labor costs. Through every study runs a variation of the same refrain: the nation's economy is experiencing "constant increase and centralization of economic power." (Monograph 26, "Economic Power and Political Processes," page 7.) Thus, in 1930 "the 200 largest nonfinancial corporations held . . . over half of the assets" of all such corporations. "In 1933 the physical assets of the 200 giants constituted about sixty percent of all those held by nonfinancial corporations, about half of the total industrial wealth, or about a fifth of the total national wealth. Expressed in monetary terms, these few corporations owned physical assets aggregating some sixty-four billions of dollars." (Monograph 11, "Bureaucracy and Trusteeship in Large Corporations," page 4.)

Nor is this the full picture. "In 1935, for example, financial institutions owned a fourth of all corporate bonds outstanding. . . . The suppliers of credit can ill afford not to be concerned with corporate policies which can have such an important effect in establishing the quality of an investment. The inevitable result is thus further linking of the nonfinancial giants through the medium of a relatively small number of financial corporations. . . . The process of linking does . . . result in concentration of industry. Whether the top control is by financial or nonfinancial institutions need not concern us at the moment. . . ." (Monograph 11, pages 7-8.)

Concentration is the rule—monopolization, continually growing more intense. With it comes a rigid control of the nation's economic and political life.

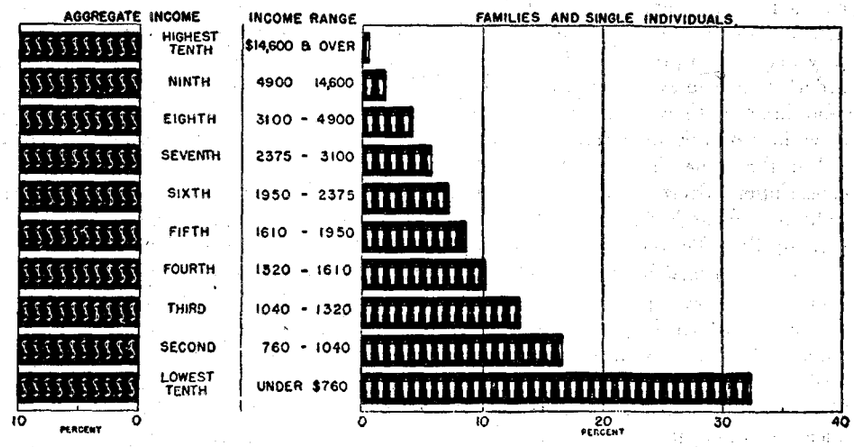
In economic theory, price reductions are regarded as a primary stimulus to the expansion of economic activity. However, concentrated industries tend to make relatively little use of this technique to expand output. . . . Actually it appears probable that much of the economy will continue to be marked by concentration, since technology . . . contributes materially to the growth of concentration. Thus there is presented this fundamental contradiction: *while technology on the one hand creates tremendous economic problems through the displacement of labor, on the other it induces concentration, thereby impeding the operation of the compensatory force of price reductions.* (Italics in the original. Monograph 22, "Technology in Our Economy," pages 219-220.)

And whereas prices are controlled by the few great combines, thus putting an end to free competition (". . . large corporations . . .

DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME IN THE UNITED STATES [1]

PROPORTION OF NATION'S CONSUMER UNITS RECEIVING EACH TENTH OF AGGREGATE INCOME [2]

1935-36



"The income level of multitudes of the Nation's workers is miserably low," states the TNEC monograph, referring to the above chart. Each dollar sign and figure represents 1 percent of the total. (Monograph 11, "Bureaucracy and Trusteeship in Large Corporations," page 116.)

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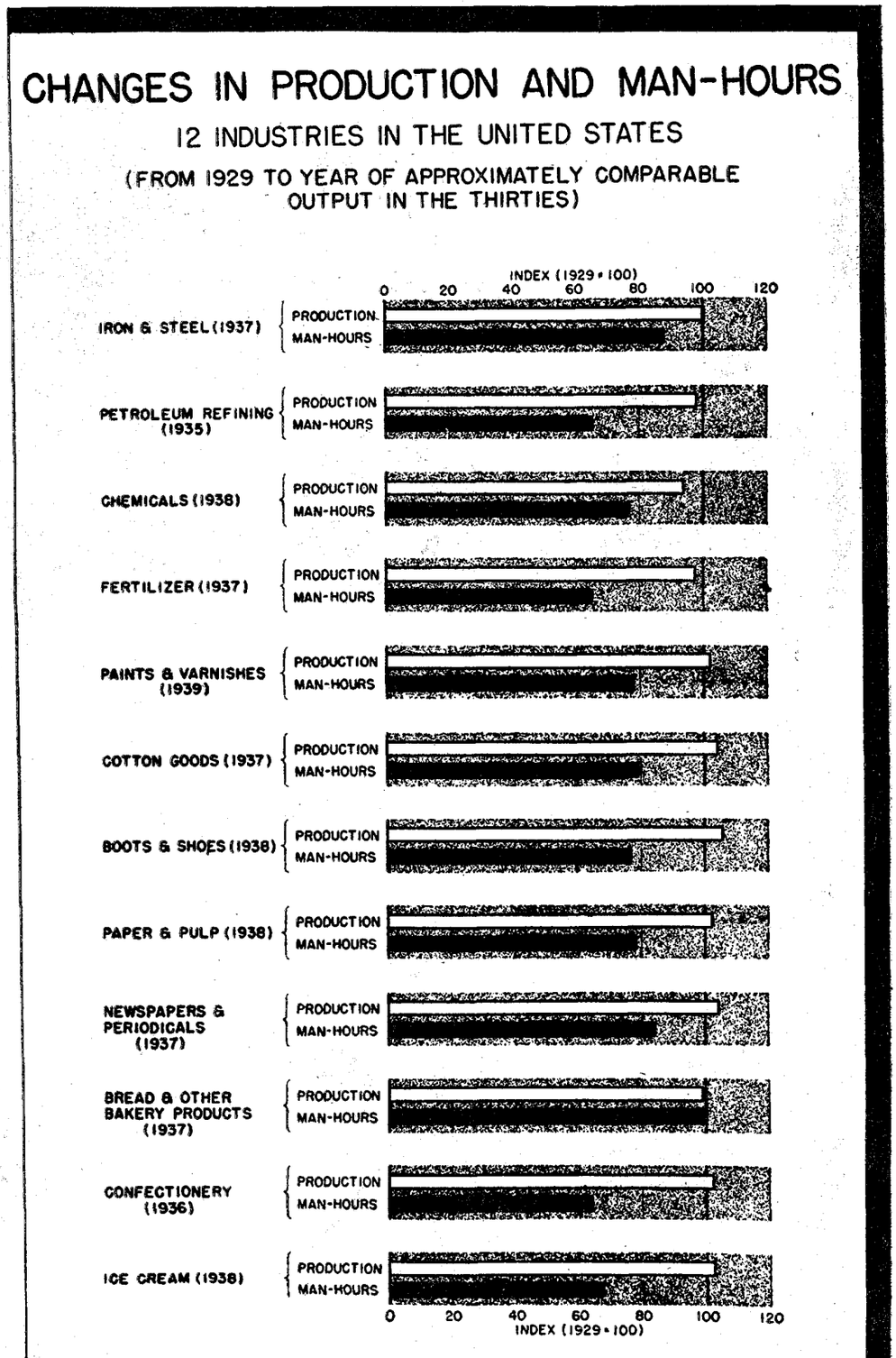
operate to repress competition," "Relative Efficiency of Large, Medium-Sized and Small Business," page 132), these same corporations speak the last word in determining the rate of taxes, tariffs, and general governmental policy.

Ordinarily in a democracy, power resides in the government, while control is exercised by the various pressure groups, chief of which is business. . . . Control is concentrated. In the struggle for dominance, it [control] is exerted largely through pressure groups—groups organized for the purpose of applying political and economic pressure to secure their own ends. . . . By far the largest and most important of these groups is to be found in "business," which in this study means the business community, as dominated by the 200 largest nonfinancial and the 50 largest financial corporations, and the employer and trade associations into which it and its satellites are organized. These 250 corporations represent a concentration of economic power in the fields of manufacturing, transportation, electric and gas utilities, and mining, and to a lesser extent, merchandising, the service industries, and even agriculture. (Monograph 26, pages 1 and 3.)

Giants everywhere. The reports make it only too clear that monopoly cannot be brushed away as a bugaboo created by the Marxists—as "authorities" have done in the past, in their anxiety above all to stifle criticism of the profit system. Monopoly, indeed, is the characteristic of American economy. And what Marxists have continually stressed, the TNEC is likewise constrained to admit —"the effect of large size in business is to protect, conserve, and perpetuate inefficiency in business and to destroy capitalism." (Monograph 13, page 132.)

So much for the broad picture of concentration, with its ugly implications, that emerges from the numerous reports on the major industrial and financial groups in the country. But supposedly, the purpose of the TNEC investigation is to suggest a way out, a cure for the disaster brought about by monopoly. For inevitably, monopoly throttles free competition, and shatters the very foundation stone upon which capitalism rests.* If the foundation goes, can the edifice remain standing? Can a few props be hurriedly jammed under the building to keep it from crashing into ruins? The TNEC reports sing the refrain that somehow, some way, free competition must and can be restored. But how to accomplish this desired end goes unanswered. "It is utterly impossible to return to the political conditions of 1800, or 1910, or even 1930 . . ." admit the investigators (Monograph 26, page 4), and to that admission should be added the further impossibility of returning to former economic conditions. What then is the solution to the following dilemma: if monopoly maims free competition, and if free competition is the premise of capitalist economy (without which the system withers and dies), and if, furthermore, it is obviously out of the question to return to the conditions of pre-monopoly


CHANGES IN PRODUCTION AND MAN-HOURS
12 INDUSTRIES IN THE UNITED STATES
(FROM 1929 TO YEAR OF APPROXIMATELY COMPARABLE OUTPUT IN THE THIRTIES)
INDEX (1929 = 100)
0 20 40 60 80 100 120
IRON & STEEL (1937)
PETROLEUM REFINING (1935)
CHEMICALS (1938)
FERTILIZER (1937)
PAINTS & VARNISHES (1939)
COTTON GOODS (1937)
BOOTS & SHOES (1938)
PAPER & PULP (1938)
NEWSPAPERS & PERIODICALS (1937)
BREAD & OTHER BAKERY PRODUCTS (1937)
CONFECTIONERY (1936)
ICE CREAM (1938)
PRODUCTION
MAN-HOURS
0 20 40 60 80 100 120
INDEX (1929 = 100)

Production and the productivity of the individual worker. Without exception, production has remained nearly constant but the number of man hours required has dropped drastically. The result is unemployment—a basic ailment of capitalism. (Monograph 22, "Technology in Our Economy," page 129.)

* Commenting on the distortion of free competition, Lenin wrote: "But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism [imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism] at a definite and very high stage of its development. . . . The fundamental economic factor in this process is the substitution of capitalist monopolies for capitalist free competition. Free competition is the fundamental attribute of capitalism and of commodity production generally. Monopoly is exactly the opposite of free competition; but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our very eyes, creating large-scale industry and eliminating small industry, replacing large-scale industry by still larger-scale industry, finally leading to such a concentration of production and capital that monopoly has been and is the result. . . ." (*Imperialism nd Imperialist War,* Selected Works of V. I. Lenin, ol. V, page 80.)

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to correct monopoly so ... free play? Something ... is certain. The Marxists ... very wrong; in truth, competition so distorts capitalist ... that it falters and grows sick, sick ... death.

Nowhere in the TNEC reports are soft words to be found for monopoly. The constant trend toward larger corporate combines, centralizing control into fewer and fewer hands, is recognized as the main cause of economic ills. Where the investigation falls short is in its lack of comprehension of monopoly itself, and the laws that govern it. Through the monographs runs a moody hope that monopoly can be curbed or even eliminated. To the contrary, the Marxists respond, examination of monopoly's growth and the evils resulting therefrom show once and for all that there can be no cure within capitalism. The momentary relief accorded by some nostrum must not be mistaken for a remedy, no matter how wishfully non-Marxist economists yearn, as Marx points out in *Poverty of Philosophy,* "to retain the categories which express bourgeois relations, without the antagonism which constitutes them and is inseparable from them."

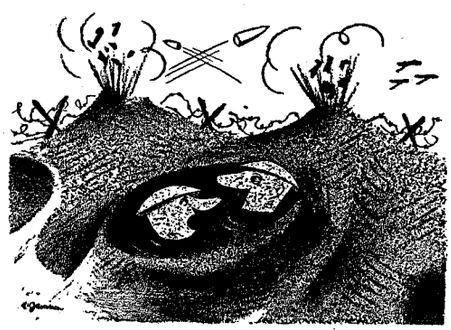
Monopoly, the TNEC monographs reveal, emerged directly from capitalist free competition, behind which was the ever-present search for profits. It was this pursuit of profits that aggravated the struggle for survival against competitors who needed markets for the commodities of their factories, mills, or mines. In the ensuing scramble, the less efficient and energetic owners succumbed; their equipment was either taken over by those who remained in business, or was junked by the survivors in favor of newer machinery increasing the capacity of their own plants. Since capitalist development was uneven, since the market was by no means stable, the grinding competition tended to favor those producers who expanded capacity and thus accumulated economic power. With the immense improvement of machinery, the strongest capitalists, able to take advantage of technological change, had the edge. "You can't afford a national radio broadcast if you are a little producer," remarked Dr. Willard Thorp, advisor on economic studies to the Department of Commerce, when he testified during the Committee hearings. "You can't advertise in the *Saturday Evening Post* if you are a little producer. Size has certain definite advantages from the standpoint of using modern marketing methods. . . . I think over the long run the increase in size is definitely to be attributed to certain changes in the economic system, the kind of products that we are producing. You can't produce automobiles with one or two employees; it has to be a fairly good-sized enterprise. The shift from household production over to producing in factories for many of our common necessities has been characterized by the growth of large-scale enterprises." (Economic Prologue, Part I, page 111.)

Mass-production required great outlays for plant and equipment; an individual with an eye for the main chance could nevertheless not afford the gigantic expenditures required for the necessary machines. "In study after study, in industry after industry, in area after area, the record is the same," reads the Foreword to Monograph 17, "Problems of Small Business." "The chance of a newcomer becoming an established member of the business community is sadly slight. He carries on until his funds are exhausted, and then disappears from the scene."

Accompanying rationalization, went concentration of production, requiring enormous financial reserves. Corporations more and more looked to the banks for capital. Finance capitalism—capitalism wherein ownership and particularly control centered in the banks—replaced industrial capitalism, wherein the manufacturers retained ownership and control for themselves. Corporations expanded into gigantic, complex empires. Free competition had given rise to greater intensity of trade; the more rapidly trade developed, the greater grew the concentration and centralization of production and capital—with monopoly the outcome.

In other words, free competition made for monopoly and the elimination of free competition. In consequence, the dream of the TNEC investigators to patch up the system by recapturing free competition is utterly without substance; the monographs prove once and for all that monopoly is the order of the day. However, for the sake of argument, even if ambitious economists could pull a rabbit out of a hat and miraculously accomplish the feat of turning the economic and political clock backwards in such a way as to restore free competition, then the whole drive of capitalism in the direction of monopoly must only be repeated. For it is inevitable, as history has proved, that free competition develops its antithesis—monopoly domination of the economic scene.

Once having established monopoly's pervasive role, the TNEC goes on to trace the ills plaguing capitalism today to monopoly's door. "A more nearly perfect mechanism for making the poor poorer and the rich richer could scarcely be desired," the Committee reported to Congress. That, too, Marxists have contended throughout the era of monopoly.



"What did you think of the 'New Republic's' timely article on the 'Philoctetes' of Sophocles last week?"

They add that the ills can no more be cured without first doing away with monopoly than a caterpillar can become a butterfly without first doing away with the caterpillar.

Why the ills? "Corporate profits are either retained within the corporate system or disbursed to individuals and organizations outside that system. Profits which are retained may be used either to expand assets or to retire debts." (Monograph 12, "Profits, Productive Activities, and New Investment," page 43.) Capitalist production is a process of accumulation. The owners as a class cannot—dare not—consume all their profits. Part must be reinvested in improvements, expansion of plants, new means of production, which in turn extend production. Moreover, reinvestment expresses the further need to pare expenses, which can be accomplished only if wages are lowered either by paying less to employees or by increasing the workers' productivity through rationalization. In either case (often side by side) the workers produce more for less pay, and the owners cut expenses and preserve (or increase) their profits.

In short, profits are derived from the exploitation of labor, which alone is capable of creating new values. Economists have always indulged in every evasion to keep from admitting the validity of the "theory of surplus value"—that profits are realized from the workers (the very key to Marxist economic analysis). In respect to this problem of the source of profits, the TNEC makes an interesting—and devastating—admission.

Labor costs were universally a principal concern of management because of their effect upon profits and upon the cash position of a company. There were numerous occasions when falling prices required cuts in costs to avoid or reduce losses, and labor costs were the only costs capable of immediate reduction. Although, in these companies, changes which could be made in labor costs were seldom sufficiently great to affect prices appreciably, they were great enough to make a big difference in profits. (Monograph 5, "Industrial Wage Rates, Labor Costs, and Price Policies," page xi.)

There is the rub. Competition swells the stream of goods offered to consumers; simultaneously it reduces buying power. Though the people have need, they cannot afford to buy, not in sufficient amounts to keep the mechanism functioning. Crises have been the rule of capitalism, becoming more severe as monopolies fattened in size and importance; until in 1929, crisis came again but this time monopoly had so bent the productive system out of shape that recovery was no longer possible. "Any time that you have got a condition of high unemployment or failure to use your resources, it is very evident that the old assumptions of the competitive system are not at work," stated Leon Henderson, then executive secretary of the TNEC. (Economic Prologue, Part I, page 175.) By the middle thirties it was obvious that the old assumption of recovery following depression was invalid, that crisis now ushered in chronic depression throughout the entire capitalist world.

The resultant unemployment cut still further into the consumers' power to buy, aug-

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menting instability. As Mr. Henderson remarked (page 169), "One of the very, very noticeable observations to be made as to the course of activity in recent years under our complex mechanism is the inability of the system to maintain itself at any level which it has attained; that is, we do not stop, there is a constant shifting all the time." Instability was an old story—with it came want and disease, hunger and suffering. On all sides plants stood idle and fields lay fallow, capable of producing the things men wanted. But not for profit, not for profit. And so they did not produce.

Yet economic breakdown was only one manifestation of capitalist chaos. Monopolies might restrict free competition, but they only intensified the competition for the market waged by the monopolies themselves. Already, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the world's territory had been completely divided. Thenceforth, no spot on the entire surface of the globe could be occupied by one power without first wresting it away from another. The struggle sharpened for colonies and dependencies, spheres of influence and mandates. Monopoly doomed capitalism to war, to one war following the other. It seems clear why Lenin called monopoly capitalism "moribund." Its own contradictions allowed it only the perspective of self-destruction.

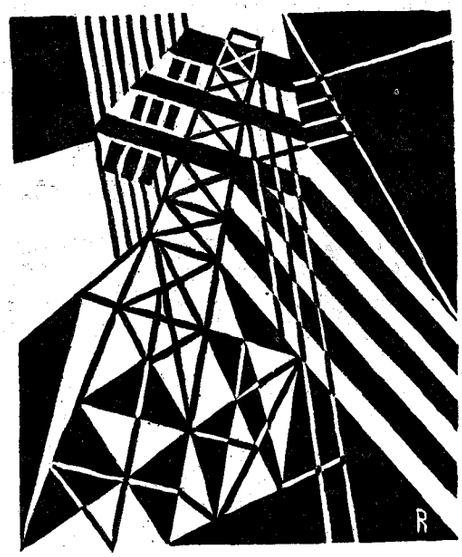
This discussion resolves itself into the question: if free competition cannot be restored once monopoly fastens its tentacles on the profit system, and if monopoly capitalism inevitably brings crisis and war—and only crisis and war—what then? Senator O'Mahoney, chairman of the TNEC, says, "The task of democracy is to preserve the freedom and independence of the individual in this economic and political complexity. . . ." The TNEC report to Congress on March 31, 1941, condemned "the regimentation of men by concentrated economic power because that likewise is the antithesis of liberty. . . . The concentration of economic power and wealth by means of practices, devices, and organizations which decency and common sense condemn must first be stopped. . . ." But how? Monopoly, it is all too clear, is here to stay. Senator O'Mahoney ponders, and replies, that since monopoly cannot be spirited away, the government should

> provide a national rule for the national corporations that carry on national commerce. . . . It would not be difficult so to draft a national charter law . . . which, for example, would make corporate directors trustees in fact as well as in law. . . . Once it is made clear that the purpose of such a law is to stop the trend toward concentration both in business and in government and to protect the interests of employees and the consuming public as well as stockholders, a broader opportunity would probably be presented for the drafting of a national law to meet acknowledged national needs. Business leaders who resist national charters for national business are standing in their own light.

It seems that in place of the monopolies, the Senator would create super-monopolies, chartered and "controlled" by Washington. The suggestion remains as yet vague. But it has a suspicious smell. "Controlled" monopolies, in the first place, is a contradiction in terms: neither planning nor control capable of preventing crisis and war can succeed while the profit system is maintained. Production can be "controlled" only in the sense that it can be diverted into new channels. Where formerly energies were directed toward the manufacture of goods useful to the people, now the drive is toward production of war materials. Profits can still be raised, to be sure; in this sense, production can be regulated—but only for the purposes of imperialism and war—and that has nothing to do with the "democracy" Senator O'Mahoney praises. Nor can war waged by monopoly (recall that the TNEC labeled monopoly the greatest enemy of democracy) be anything other than an imperialist war.

THE SENATOR'S SUGGESTION brings back memories. The American people have often desperately attacked the evil of monopoly. And each time, soft words have turned away their wrath. They have been fed the Big Stick, the New Freedom, the anti-trust laws, the New Deal. Without exception, the measures supposedly designed to regulate and bust the trusts turned out to be ineffectual, helpful rather than injurious to the monopolies. Senator O'Mahoney is trading once again on the people's natural rage against the giants. But the TNEC has proved that monopoly and developed capitalism are synonymous; Senator O'Mahoney cannot save the tree and still cut out the roots. Therefore, the Senator for all his bluster, is going to leave the roots intact.

The demagogy that will accompany the new "offensive" is old and threadbare. Moreover, this is no longer 1908 or 1916 or even 1937. Capitalism has aged; its plight, plagued as it is by contradictions, grows desperate. In addition, Senator O'Mahoney's plea for super-corporations has been heard before in other countries. Mussolini organized twenty-two super-corporations in 1934 to be "the instrument that, under th
carries out completely, or
general interest, the re
ductive forces with a view to the ex
of the wealth, the political power, and th
well-being of the Italian people. . . ." Italy remains a capitalist nation wherein the monopolies still make huge profits. Hitler likewise "reorganized" German economy, bringing control to industry and commerce. Germany remains a capitalist nation, and the monopolies make profits in some instances even larger than they do in America.



To repeat, the use to which TNEC findings are put is all-important. A lot is said, in this country, about a "new order." Apparently, the TNEC investigation, which proves that capitalism is diseased, is (if Senator O'Mahoney's hints are any indication) to be the excuse to regulate the economic system for the purpose of establishing this "new order." Mussolini did it, and so did Hitler. The Roosevelt administration grows ambitious. Yet fine words glorifying the "new order" to preserve capitalism do not alter the fact that the goal is nothing but fascism.

Under whatever name it masquerades, the intent of fascism is to protect monopoly that it may live and prosper, that it may "solve" contradictions by pushing from one crisis to another, from one war to a more costly and horrible war. Such is the dynamic of capitalism. Such is the outlook offered by the profit system.

Marxists conclude therefore that no other course remains for sane men than to put an end to monopoly's reign. That becomes possible only if the economic system is changed. The TNEC studies bespeak the need of such a change. In one country, the Soviet Union, a new economy has replaced outworn capitalism, and dilemmas, unsolved by the Committee, no longer afflict the people. Socialism has eliminated problems germane to capitalism that cannot be overcome within an economy of profit. For socialism puts an end to the private ownership of the means of production—and simultaneously to private monopoly. Peace and security are the fruits of the order that is truly new. Ahead lie more widespread benefits as surely as the continuation of monopoly rule condemns the people of capitalist countries to ever deepening ruin and despair.

The TNEC, the story of America, Inc., indicates why Marxists strive for socialism. Like all scientists, they observe and analyze, and they act upon their analysis in the only way that promises a remedy to the disease wracking every capitalist nation of the world. Imperialism, the era of monopoly, is the eve of the proletarian social revolution, wrote Lenin. A new world has been born out of the infamy of czarist Russia. It is waiting to be born elsewhere out of the gutted profit system. Let the people learn the facts as presented by the TNEC. Capitalism offers only frustration and death. Socialism offers the future.

BRUCE MINTON.

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SKY: LONDON 1941

Randall Swingler writes from Britain as the bombs fall. "They have been dug out of ruins, walked through flames." Why the postman went mad. Life in the world's biggest city.

London.

IN THESE times the early sun strikes across the air each morning with a new quality of astonishment. People go below ground at sunfall as resignedly as if they were going to lay themselves down forever in their graves. Rising to the surface of life again at six o'clock in the morning, one feels a stranger, looks curiously for familiar landmarks. Often to find them transmuted into a tumble of rubble, girders jutting out of the mess like fractured bones from a crushed body, altering the whole outlook as a single missing tooth will alter a face.

The sun itself seems to recapitulate this strangeness, feeling across the shattered and tremulous air as if nervous of breaking the silence, touching with a kind of fantastic disbelief the surface of surviving buildings. And the crowds swarming up into the streets, half hypnotized by lack of sleep and creeping exhaustion, are vaguely gilded, strange as a new genus wandering through the ruins of a lost civilization.

AFTERNOON RAID. We could just see them high up, so high they only appeared like ghost-fish, wafers of silver, transparent nail-filings, almost dissolved in the intense blue of the afternoon sky. Then with an abrupt rap the guns open up close by.

We stand under a railway bridge and watch. A hundred yards down the line is another bridge with a hole in it, a big crumbling hole through which a bomb fell last night. Under the heap of broken brick in the roadway, there are still two bodies buried, they say. People who took, like us now, the only cover available.

Flowering suddenly in the sky above us little mushrooms of smoke appear.

Then comes a faint and ubiquitous whistling in the air like the wind through marsh grass, or the sound of curlews passing over. So faint you pay no attention to it, till with a sudden last rush the first impact comes, a scatter of glass, the crack of a falling slate. And the shrapnel drops, like a desultory hail on the roads, on the roofs, on the walls.

We press our faces to the black wall of the railway bridge. And while we lean there, apparently weeping or praying, thinking how ridiculous we must look from behind, we hear that extraordinary noise like the breaking of matchwood, developing into something more intense like crushing paper, then into an irregular whistle. And while it is still going on, the brickwork shivers against our arms, the road lurches, we are thrown against each other, someone tumbles on the pavement and cries out, and then we are smothered in the crack and the spreading roar of the bombs.

Immediately, as if in futile anger, the guns begin thumping the air again. The first thing we notice is the dun-colored cloud of dust swelling toward us, twenty yards down the street. We run over. The wreckage has settled. The ruin of three shops flows over the road.

IN LONDON AND BERLIN

IT WAS one of the great ironies of our time that Sir Josiah Stamp, the eminent British economist, was killed, together with his wife, in the big London bombardment last week. Stamp was an original member of the Anglo-German Fellowship. He chummed with Hitler at the Nuremberg rally just prior to Munich. He was one of those eminent Englishmen that built up the Nazis, gave them half of Europe over the bodies of brave Spaniards and Czechoslovaks, lost control of their Frankenstein, and now—their lives. The tragedy does not lie in one man's death. It is the tragedy of the millions of common folk in Britain who are paying with their lives for the brutality which their own leaders, like Lord Stamp, brought upon them. It is a horror too difficult to comprehend—eight or nine hours, all night long, one-, two-, ten-ton explosives come crashing down from blackened skies upon blackened cities. And it does not help Londoners that Berlin will be bombed the night after; it does not help men and women and children in Berlin bomb shelters all night that the *Luftwaffe* is reducing London. These bombardments do not produce hatred for the other side. They only produce heartsickness, a dismal anguish, a fierce blind rage at the system and the leadership which visits such tortures.

The bombardments are the most ruthless test of human stamina and capacity for suffering. As Randall Swingler's report suggests, they produce the deepest revulsion, the most merciless questioning of all established values. Capitalism is reducing the cities which capitalism established to dust heaps and graveyards. There will be no peace again until capitalism itself has been buried, and men come up from the wreckage to new liberties, and reconstruction. Only those who understand this in London and Berlin will endure and win this war.

NOT HOMELESS. She stands in her doorway with a baby in her arms. She is so thin and white that you might expect her burning red eyes to set light to her papery skin. The lintel above her head is the only thing left straight in the house. The roof has fallen in. The parlor is a choked mass of wreckage. She is living in the kitchen, "the only safe room," where the struts of the ceiling sag down like the strands of a hammock. The frame is blown out of the window and the walls show great scars of crumbling brick.

Yes, she has been to the Town Hall. She has been to the Assistance Committee, the Billeting Office. The rest centers are crammed, they tell her. They have given her endless forms to fill out. She only gazes at them with red, hopeless eyes. So she has come back home. She doesn't know what she is going to do. The rest of the street is a desert. No sound but my own feet on the glass-sanded pavement. Two cats furtively picking over the vast rubbish heap that was four houses now bridging the street, are the only live things in sight.

She is not homeless because she still has a "safe room."

Down the long narrow passage the smoke drifts from fifty pipes in endless whirls and spirals. The light is dim and raw as rusty gaslight. The people are slumped against the walls, their legs plaited together. Little children lean against their mothers, their mouths hanging open, in attitudes of complete collapse. There is no sound but the irregular rasping breath of the sleepers.

The older men and women gaze straight in front of them with that fixity by which they have learned to banish all thought of the appalling past and the impenetrable future. They call this a "rest center." This passage, running down the center of the ground floor of the building, is their "air raid shelter." Above them the school building is ugly, empty, and bare.

They have been here three weeks, some of them longer. They have no idea when they are going to move, or where, or what is going to happen to them in the future. They are human debris, to be cleared out of the way as inconspicuously as possible.

Sometimes a child is seized with a paroxysm of convulsive shudders, and clutches at its mother in sleep. The nights of horror have left a wound too deep to be seen except in sleep. One family here spent forty-eight hours without moving in an Anderson shelter while the debris of houses blown to bits gradually silted them in. Others had to be dragged from their Andersons, not because they were buried, but because they were paralyzed by the persistent hammering of death upon the walls of their world.

Their daily food is bread and jam and tea. Their daily occupation is sitting and wandering about. There is nothing else to do.

Sometimes a woman will creep back to her old street, to stand in wordless contemplation of a plot of desolation which had once been her home.

I stood by an old woman once who was gazing up at the exposed pink walls of a little flat on a top story which had been cut

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open like a fileted fish. There was no floor to it. But there was a picture crazily tilted still hanging on the wall. As I stood by her, she began to talk, not to me but simply because the presence of a passive audience made the words begin to run out.

"Fifty years of struggle that was," she said. "Me and my old man, we bin married fifty-one years last March. And all that time we was building it up, making a home—it's not easy you know, making a home. There's some of them don't understand it now. Not like when everything you've got in there is something you've wanted and had to struggle to get—then you value it, you know, more than what money could buy."

Then she did turn to me, and what she said was meant for me to hear.

"Do you know, young man, what they gave me at the Assistance for my home? Do you know what they gave me? Ten shillings—10s. (approximately $2.00) for my old man and me instead of my home."

Fifty years of struggle for 10s. There she is down at the end of the passage. Her head is forward on her breast but I don't think she is sleeping. She is very ill but nobody will do anything about it. One of the younger women got angry one day and went and protested to the lady who sits at a table taking names in a big book that nobody paid any attention to the old lady who was ill. Next day an official came round and told the young woman to apologize for being a nuisance to the kind lady who was giving her services to look after the rest center.

These people have come through nights when the sky and the earth boiled around them. They have been dug out of ruins, walked through flames. They have come from an area where every street is scarred.

And they have been brought to a rest center two miles away, where the streets on either side are blocked by craters, where every night more houses are reduced to dust, and the sound of guns and bombs hammers in the wounds of their memory. And they sleep in the passage, for that is safest.

Last night, just after t[illegible] fallen together in our district, a man [illegible] mad in the street. He seemed to be the only person in the open air that night. People silent, alert in basements and shelters, heard him rave and scream about the square cursing Churchill, cursing the government with every kind of obscenity, in a voice that echoed and carried for yards around. It was as if madness had stricken him with an overwhelming clarity of political vision. Unearthing perhaps a knowledge which sanity never dared to recognize.

I had met him once or twice. He was a postman, a youngish, quiet, well-meaning chap, a good listener, saying little, and nothing ever in criticism of anyone or anything.

No one stopped him. No one went to his aid. It must have been nearly half an hour that we heard him raving and weeping and howling curses at the sky. And everyone listening in tense awe, forgetful of the persistent thuds of the guns.

RANDALL SWINGLER.

THE END OF THE DAY: BUNKS IN ST. MARTIN'S **CRYPT.** *A drawing by Edward Kapp, from the* "New Statesman and Nation."

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WHAT PRICE MR. HENDERSON?

Adam Lapin, writing from Washington, says the government talks "price-fixing" when it means "wage-cutting." The meaning of Leon Henderson's manipulations.

Washington.

WHAT'S behind the rise in prices? Since the outbreak of war in Europe, food prices have gone up approximately five percent, and the general cost of living about 2.5 percent. Wholesale prices have risen by about five percent. These facts are more or less generally known, and do not in themselves appear spectacular. But beneath the surface of generalized price indexes, there is an unmistakable trend toward sharp inflationary increases accentuated by speculation and inventory hoarding. This can be seen most clearly in figures issued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on the market prices of twenty-eight selected commodities, described by experts here as the very guts of industrial production. The index of these twenty-eight commodities has gone up by more than thirty-eight percent since August 1939, and the selected group of raw industrial materials has increased slightly more than thirty-six percent. These increases have not yet been completely reflected in the retail price of consumer goods, or even in wholesale goods. But they will be pretty soon—probably within the next six months.

Against this background of a clear-cut trend toward sharp price increases, the President has set up the new Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply and has appointed quondam New Dealer Leon Henderson as administrator. The obvious question, of course, is: what is Henderson going to do about it? To assume that Henderson's outfit will simply issue a series of orders freezing industrial prices would be to ignore a host of factors which enter into the situation. Price control is by no means equivalent to keeping prices stationary. During the first world war, for example, government price fixing meant official sanction for sharp price rises. The Wilson administration used price control primarily to encourage production rather than keep prices down.

In terms of general policy, Henderson will have to guide his activities within the limits of two major administration policies: (1) to attempt to keep wages from rising, on the theory that higher wages are the key factor in price increases; (2) to cut down consumer purchasing power as well as the production of consumer goods so that the economy can be devoted to the war effort without too much competition from civilian demand.

Obviously, this long-range program is the diametrical opposite of the old New Deal economic theory. New Dealers, Henderson among them, held to the position that there was no inflationary danger in a large national debt as long as the purchasing power of the masses could be constantly increased; hence the emphasis on government spending to increase consumption. At best, this point of view was given only an inadequate trial. Government spending to raise purchasing power was never sustained on a large enough scale or for a long enough period. Now it has been altogether abandoned "for the duration."

Among Leon Henderson's chief qualifications for his new job is his remarkable flexibility. He was one of the first of the old New Deal circle to support measures necessary to put into effect a full-fledged war economy controlled by big business. He realized quickly that a new era of business participation in government had arrived, and he managed to strike up a number of friendships with the incoming horde of dollar-a-year men. As long ago as last summer, Henderson joined with William S. Knudsen in lobbying on Capitol Hill for generous amortization provisions and other important tax concessions to big business. He joined with John D. Biggers and other OPM boys in squashing anti-trust suits. At first Henderson's old New Deal associates were angry. They thought he was deserting the President for big business. Then they realized that he had simply been smart. He was going to get ahead in the administration.

HENDERSON made it plain at his very first press conference after the President appointed him to his new job that he planned to crack down on wage increases. His office, he said, "will be watching wages as a prime cost, of course, and if there are unwarranted prospective rises, the same as if there are unwarranted price rises, we will have a decided interest in them." A few days later Donald Nelson, head of the OPM's division of purchases, told a press conference: "What we should guard against is a rising spiral with prices constantly chasing wages by an ever widening margin." It apparently did not occur to Nelson that the situation was working out the other way around, that wages were chasing increases in the cost of living.

Both Henderson and the President himself are reported to have advised Benjamin F. Fairless, president of United States Steel, against granting the ten percent wage increases demanded by the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. Similarly, the administration was none too anxious for the coal miners to get their additional dollar a day. Now the SWOC has succeeded in obtaining its demand; and the miners have persuaded at least the Northern operators that it would be the better part of wisdom to grant that extra. These and other victories by labor seem to have paved the way toward a series of wage increases at this time. The administration may have lost the first round in this battle with labor, but it will still try to keep wage increases within certain limits. That, no doubt, is what Henderson is expected to do. It is worth noting that the Vinson bill, now pending before the House, would not only curb strikes and freeze the open shop but bar improvements in wages and working conditions. Secretary of the Navy Knox has actively supported this bill, and not a single government spokesman has explicitly criticized the measure.

Besides possible government curbs on wage increases, other methods of limiting purchasing power will be tried—for example, the taxes on low-income groups which will apparently be levied in the new $3,500,000,000 tax bill. Another method is curtailment of consumer goods production either through priorities or informal administration agreements with industry, as for example the contemplated cut in automobile output for civilian use. The most succinct expression of Henderson's function in this respect was contained in the President's executive order setting up the new price control agency. That order described one of Henderson's tasks as follows: "After the satisfaction of military defense needs to provide, through the determination of policies and the formulations of plans and programs, for the equitable distribution of the residual supply of such materials and commodities among competing civilian demands."

THE MILITARY MACHINE is to come first. Consumers are to get the "residual supply." This was explicit in the President's order. And it has been implicit in the successive demotions of Miss Harriet Elliott, formerly Consumer Commissioner of the Defense Commission, ever since she made her unfortunate statement last fall calling attention to the fact that 45,000,000 people were living below the "safety line" of proper diet. Miss Elliott's crime consisted in stating that the correction of this condition was an essential part of "national defense." For this the President

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publicly rebuked Miss Elliott at a press conference. He reminded her, and other government officials who may have stood in need of a little reminder, that "national defense" means the production of guns and munitions, not diet, Christmas trees, or other frills. Soon afterwards the President stripped Miss Elliott of most of her authority, and turned over a number of the functions of her office to Federal Security Administrator Paul McNutt. Now she is simply one of Henderson's subordinates. At best, she will continue to issue statements informing the public that price increases in various lines are "not justified." This provides little solace to the suffering consumer, and does not keep prices down.

Despite the occasional table-pounding and finger-pointing in which Henderson likes to indulge, he is not likely to deviate far from his general anti-consumer, pro-business course. Certainly there was nothing in his order freezing steel prices to cause undue alarm in business circles. He fixed the ceiling of steel prices at their present high levels, and made full use of the elaborate chicanery of existing steel prices, including basing points, transportation charges, and extras. And as if all this were not enough, he promised to institute an immediate study to see whether higher prices are needed. As far as the big producers are concerned, this guarantees high profits which will be little affected by the recent wage increases. Steel profits are now so substantial that a sum equal to at least 70 percent of the wage increases would have been collected by the government in excess profits taxes.

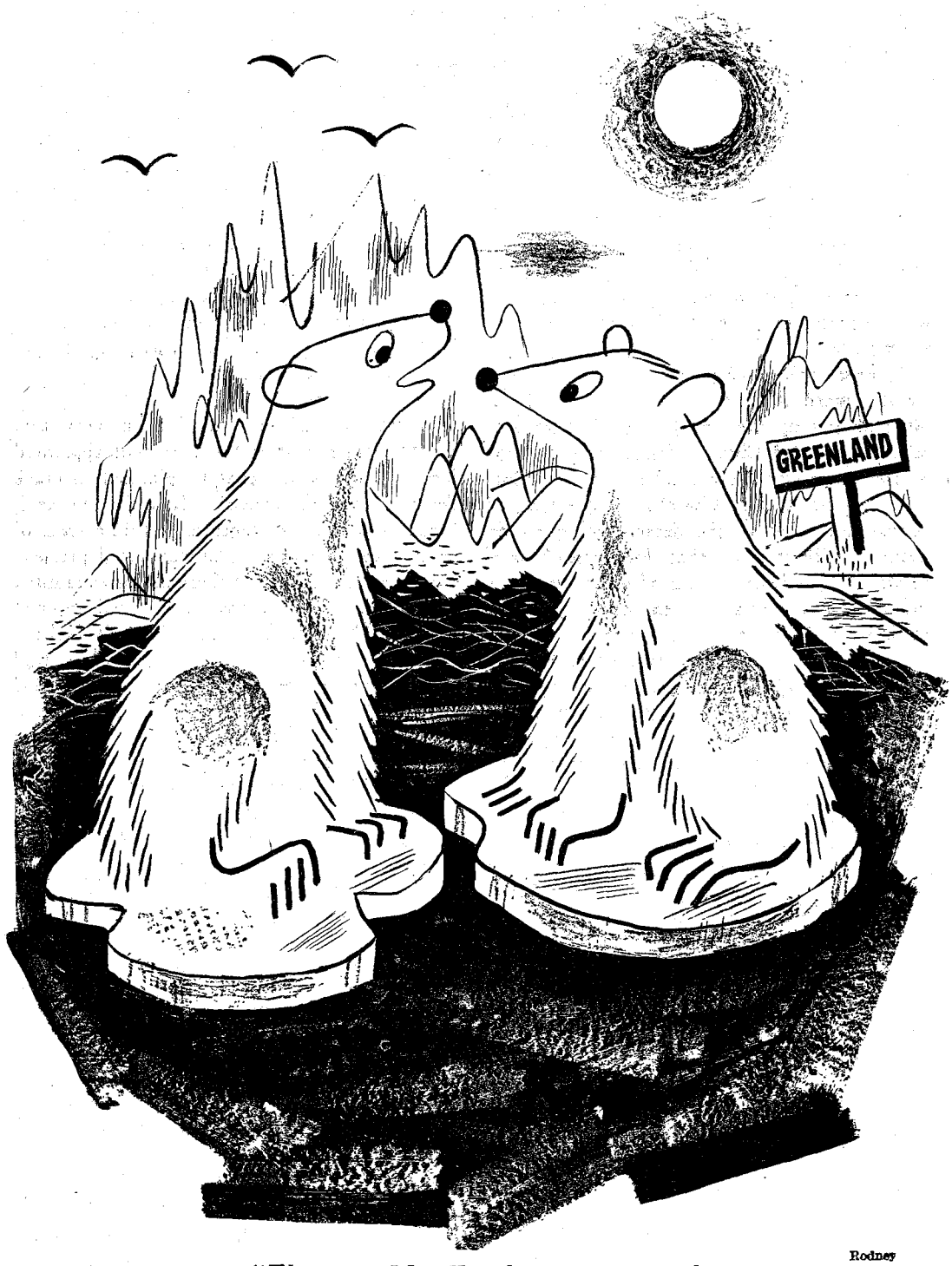
Henderson is reported to lean towards the price-ceiling plan proposed by his Wall Street friend, Bernard Baruch. This is a modification of the old "bulk-line" method price-fixing which was such a boon to the profiteers during the first world war. The guiding principle of this method, as practiced by the War Industries Board, the Price-Fixing Committee, and the Fuel Administration, was to get capacity production rather than limit price increases. A study of average costs in any given industry was made by the Federal Trade Commission. Then an estimate of production necessary for the war effort was arrived at. The "bulk-line cost" was determined by the unit cost of the highest cost producer whose output was needed to meet total requirements. Naturally this played right into the hands of the big companies which could produce well below the cost of the small marginal producers whose costs determined the "bulk-line." And, of course, prices went way up during the first world war. At the peak of the war effort, they skyrocketed to 240 percent of the 1913 level.

BARUCH is for using this "bulk-line" method. One of the specific points in his plan would give the government's price-fixing agency power to revise prices upward when this appeared necessary in the interests of maximum production. He would, however, depart from the World War method of fixing only key prices—he would fix over-all ceiling prices for all commodities. Government price-fixing would be universal rather than selective. Baruch says in his privately printed and quaintly titled book, *Taking the Profits out of War,* that his plan relates to "every price in the whole national pattern," including "rents, wages, interest rates, commissions, fees —in short the price for every item and service in commerce."

The "bulk-line" price-fixing method, however, is so outrageous that there has been some discussion in government circles of revising this principle. Administration officials have been thinking in some cases of subsidizing the highest cost producers rather than fixing the ceiling at their cost of production. This would, of course, leave a neat profit margin for all concerned, but would possibly smooth off some of the raw edges of another scandal such as occurred during the last war when copper prices rose from 16⅔ cents a pound to 35¾ cents while the big producers were making plenty of money at the former price.

Henderson's reported sympathy for the Baruch plan is one of the most ominous factors in the entire price picture. Two aspects of this plan are outstanding: first, it provides for government wage-fixing; second, it appears to be closely modeled after the fascist pattern of Italy and Germany and entails a completely militarized economy. Despite possible revisions and changes, the whole present trend is toward eventual application of the extremely dangerous Baruch plan.

ADAM LAPIN.



Rodney

"They say Mr. Knudsen recommends a 'cooling off' period."

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SONS OF UNDYING SPAIN . . ."

"Hasta pronto, hermanos," Dolores Ibarruri wrote. Why Petain's murderers assassinated 150 International Brigadiers. Alvah Bessie speaks of those who do not feel Spain is lost.

One hundred and fifty International Brigade veterans of the war in Spain were massacred recently in the French concentration camp at Le Vernay. . . . Slaying of the imprisoned loyalist fighters was revealed in a radiogram received by the Lincoln Brigade yesterday from London urging immediate protests against the unprecedented outrage.—News item, April 19.

THERE was a day in Barcelona, Spain, when the handful of Americans who had survived the struggle marched down the great Diagonal, and they thought of the man whose name they bore in Spain: Lincoln. They marched with other men from other countries, and what they saw and felt that day reminded them of something Lincoln said: *"The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations and tongues, and kindreds."*

That was what he said, and as they marched that day they knew his words were true and would be true. For never before that day —even when they had come to Spain, even in the hideous torture of action—was the meaning of those words so obvious. Here it was, embodied in the flesh; and they were thinking, too, of other words, words written by a woman, not a man; words written by a Spaniard, not an American. Those words echoed the same profound idea. Most of the Internationals who survived the war carried with them from Spain a small, well-printed booklet written by Dolores Ibarruri and bearing her photograph. What Pasionaria had written was printed in three languages, Spanish, French, and English, and it began:

Hasta pronto, hermanos . . .

It is very hard to say a few words of farewell to the heroes of the International Brigades, both because of what they are and what they represent. A feeling of sorrow, of infinite grief catches us by the throat . . . sorrow for those who are going away, for the soldiers of the highest ideal of human redemption, exiled from their countries, persecuted by the tyrants of all peoples . . . grief for those who will stay here forever, mingled with the Spanish soil and in the very depths of our hearts, bathed in the light of our everlasting gratitude. . . .

They did not think of themselves as heroes, these men from fifty-four foreign countries who had come to Spain to live and to struggle, to fight and to die beside their Spanish brothers. They came, not as the legions of the tyrant Mussolini—in transport ships, by divisions, by army corps, with full equipment. They did not come in the same way or by the same means as those men whom Hitler sent in transport ships and transport planes —technicians, pilots, artillery experts, strategists. They came almost naked and surely with empty hands, singly and in groups, from countries thousands of miles away, their native countries or their temporary sanctuary from fascism—men from the Americas, north and south, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Mexico; they came from France and Germany, from Italy, from Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Ireland, England. They came from Czechoslovakia and China, from Belgium, Holland, Hungary and Bulgaria, from Austria and Yugoslavia, Greece and Switzerland, Egypt and Japan. . . .

. . . You came to us from all peoples, from all races. You came like brothers of ours, like sons of undying Spain; and in the hardest days of the war, when the capital of the Spanish Republic was threatened, it was you, gallant comrades of the International Brigades, who helped to save the city with your fighting enthusiasm, your heroism, and your spirit of sacrifice. . . .

Madrid. That was the night of November 6 in 1936, when the people, hearing the rhythmic tramp of disciplined feet marching through the streets in the early morning hours, flung open their wondows to see the conquering "four columns" of the traitors Franco, Mola, Varela, and De Llano, and saw instead the French, the Germans—anti-fascists who paid dearly in University City and in the Guadarramas, on the Manzanares, and later at Jarama, for their enthusiasm, for their sacrifice. They left their dead in thousands in those early days.

And still they came; escaping from their own countries like thieves in the night; they could not tell their friends, their relatives, their children, or their wives where they were going. Remember Leider, Doran? Remember Gunnar Ebb? (He was from Finland, where he had just finished a four-year prison term for working class activity and when he was released he came to Spain. And when he left Spain he returned to "democratic" little Finland where he rots in jail—if he is still alive.)

. . . In deathless verses Jarama and Guadalajara, Brunete and Belchite, Levante and the Ebro sing the courage, the self-sacrifice, the daring and the discipline of the men of the International Brigades. . . .

Guadalajara was the place where the Italians ran—but it was also the place where the Italians attacked; those who ran were the men sent by Mussolini, 100,000 strong; they had no stomach for the fight; they thought they were on their way to Ethiopia to colonize; they found themselves in Spain, to fight and die. Those who attacked were the red-scarved Garibaldini, *our* Italians, men who had escaped the dungeons and the torture chambers of Lipari, men exiled in France, in Switzerland, in Britain, who gave the lie forever to the chauvinism which holds that Italians make bad soldiers, cannot fight. *How* they could fight! and how they fought! How they will fight again, when the time is ripe! For working men know how to fight when there is some point in fighting.

Jarama, where the Americans sang a song set to the tune of our *Red River Valley;* it was a sad song and a happy song, and many died to that song. Brunete and Belchite saw the Americans, and the Ebro. Remember Paul Wendorf (student) and Aaron Lopoff (writer), remember Joe Bianca (seaman), Jim Lardner (correspondent), Joe Shenker (lumberman), Joe Dallet (steel worker), Robert Merriman (professor), Milton Herndon, Angelo's brother, George Boehm who spoke in such a quiet voice? These were Americans in the American vein and temper, internationals, too, in the only sense in which that word has meaning.

. . . For the first time in the history of the peoples' struggles, there has been the spectacle, breath-taking in its grandeur, of the formation of International Brigades to help to save a threatened country's freedom and independence, the freedom and independence of our Spanish land. Communists, Socialists, Anarchists, Republicans—men of different views and different religions, yet all of them fired with a deep love for liberty and justice. And they came and offered themselves to us unconditionally.

And those who survived went home. Home? Some did, some few to England, to France, to America. More of those who survived went back into the exile from which they came, back into the prisons from which they had escaped—French prisons and concentration camps for the volunteers for liberty! They still are there in the cells that now belong to Hitler.

On September 25, the men of the International Brigades were withdrawn from the fighting lines. For a month they waited in small towns scattered throughout Catalonia. On October 26 they were in Poblet, hundreds of them, the Lincolns, the red-scarved Garibaldis, the anti-fascist Germans, in the courtyard of what had been a monastery (and is probably a monastery again). There they saw and heard, from the balcony that surrounded the courtyard, Marty, the organizer of the Brigades, and Negrin, tired but still vigorous, and Delage, the commissar, and Modesto, the tough-guy who commanded the Army of the Ebro—weeping as he spoke. "Tell your people," he said, "the truth of Spain. Tell them that we are fighting for our independence. . . . Fight," he said, "with courage and with energy, in your respective countries,

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for the liberty of all peoples, while we continue to fight here with our guns in hand."

. . . *They gave us everything,* wrote Dolores, *their youth or their maturity; their science or their aspirations. . . . And they asked us for nothing at all. That is to say, they did want a post in the struggle, they did aspire to the honor of dying for us. . . . Banners of Spain! Salute these many heroes! Lower Spain's banners in honor of so many martyrs! . . .*

Martyrs! they would have laughed at the word—Kuroculliotis, the Greek dock worker, Ralph Fox, the British writer, Hans Beimler, the German deputy, General Lukacs, the Hungarian, the Reverend Hilliard, "boxing parson" from Killarney, Jim Rae from Glasgow, Scotland, John Lenthier, the actor from America, Rodolfo de Armas of Havana, Dick Tynan, seaman from the Coast.

On the night of October 28, what remained of the Lincoln Battalion, of the British and the Mac-Paps and the Cubans, waiting in Ripoll near the French border, mounted a train at four in the cold mountain morning, to go back down the coast to Barcelona. The deep valley in which the small town lay was filled with cold wet fog that bit through their thin clothes, chilled their undernourished bodies. Something went wrong with the train schedule, and no locomotive turned up to pull that train till 8:30 in the morning, and the men sat there through the night. Near noon they arrived in Barcelona, and that afternoon they paraded for the people, with thousands of other IB men who had converged upon the city for the day.

NO MAN who marched in that parade, or witnessed it, will ever forget it. That was the day the Americans thought of what Lincoln had said: *The strongest bond. . . .* Down the wide Diagonal they marched, 4,000 of the never more than 25,000 international volunteers—that's all there were to march. Since the beginning they had been in every tight spot in the lines; they were the shock troops that checked the fascists at the Manzanares, that held the Jarama road; they fought at Guadalajara and in the south, at Brunete and the two Belchites; they were in reserve at Teruel while the Spanish took in five days the town it took the fascists two months to recapture. They were at Lerida, at Fuentes de Ebro, Quinto, Caspe and Alcaniz, Batea and Gandesa, Mora de Ebro, across the river in retreat and back again in the offensive through Corbera and Villalba, the Sierra Pandols, to the walls of Gandesa. Now they marched without arms (as they had come to Spain), in the patched and ragged "uniforms" they had worn on the Ebro, their last great action. They marched on a street strewn and ankle-deep in flowers, between vast crowds held back vainly by green-uniformed guards. Overhead, squadrons of the red-winged *Moscas* dived to the level of the housetops, idling their motors and zooming with wide-open throttles—but the sound was different to the marching men. From the airplanes, armed and ready for any fascist raid upon the city, there fell clouds of leaflets printed in the red and gold stripes of Catalonia. Have you ever seen the Catalan language? *Espanya assolira la seva victoria, que sera tambe la vostra!* the leaflets said: Spain will follow the path to victory, which will also be your path! *Espanya dira al mon el que es la solidaritat entre els homes!* Spain will show the world what solidarity between men means! And on the back of the leaflet were the names of twenty-seven men, men of Belgium, Germany, France and Czechoslovakia, Holland, the Americas, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Hungary, Slovakia, Canada and Italy, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Austria and Norway, Switzerland, their units and the battles where they fell. How the names sound upon the tongue! Repeat them—the Rakosi Battalion, the Lincoln, the Mackenzie-Papineau, the Edgar Andre, Thaelmann, Palafox, the Commune de Paris, the Andre Marty, Vaillant-Couturier, Luise Michel, the Henry Wuillemin, the Henri Barbusse, Ralph Fox, the 6th of February, the XIIth of February, the Masaryk, Chapeiev, Rosa Luxemburg—the people's heroes and the people's cause.

THE PEOPLE cheering, weeping—no one has ever before or since seen so many thousands of men, women, and children, weeping simultaneously—the women holding up their children, the young girls breaking through the lines to strew flowers, give bouquets, to kiss the men. In the stands Azana, Negrin, La Pasionaria, the officers and leaders of the men and of the government—Hans and El Campesino, Companys (dead by a fascist firing squad a few weeks ago), Hernandez and Modesto, Enrique Lister the stone-mason, Rojo, and Cordon, Taguena, Gallo, Constancia de la Mora and her husband, the air commander Hidalgo de Cisneros.

. . . *Mothers! Women!* wrote Dolores, *When the years pass by and the wounds of the war are being stanched; when the cloudy memory of the sorrowful, bloody days returns in a present of freedom, peace, and well-being; when the feelings of rancor are dying away and when pride in a free country is felt equally by all Spaniards, then speak to your children. Tell them of these men of the International Brigades. Tell them how, coming over seas and mountains, crossing frontiers bristling with bayonets, and watched for by ravening dogs thirsting to tear at their flesh, these men reached our country as crusaders for freedom, to fight and die for Spain's liberty and independence which were threatened by German and Italian fascism. They gave up everything: their loves, their countries, home, and fortune; fathers, mothers, wives, brothers, sisters, and children, and they came and told us: "We are here. Your cause, Spain's cause, is ours—it is the cause of all advanced and progressive mankind."*

These are the men, of whom Pasionaria wrote, whose living comrades returned to America to meet the slanders of a Hearst, a Dies—a small thing, you will [illegible] France, Finland, Sweden to be entombed, starved, beaten, diseased, and eventually handed over to the Gestapo and its Italian counterpart; who remained, unable to escape from Spain, to become slave labor for the butcher Franco, and to rebuild Belchite before hunger, cold, and maltreatment lay them to rest beside their comrades, who at least had fought to die!

. . . *You can go proudly,* wrote Dolores. *You are history. You are legend. You are the heroic example of democracy's solidarity and universality, in the face of the shameful, "accommodating" spirit of those who interpret democratic principles with their eyes on the hoards of wealth or the industrial shares which they want to preserve from any risk.* How right she was! How right she is!

THE LESSON of Spain, the unparalleled significance of the International Brigades, grows clearer with every day that passes. Who now can doubt that Hitler and Mussolini could have been stopped in Spain, had the great "democracies" been so minded? Who now is so blind or uninformed as to permit the great fraud they are attempting to perpetuate, to be perpetuated? There is no American with red blood in his veins who does not instinctively hate fascism. But people must be told, they must be told time and time again, that fascism need not wear a brown shirt or a black one, that it need not originate in Europe. They must be shown, time and time again, until there is not a conscious mind in our country that does not know the nature and the aims of fascism—that it *never* arises from below, that it is *always* imposed from above; that it is the naked and unconcealed and military maintenance of *things as they are,* by the reactionary minority, upon the majority.

Just as the men who left Spain promised the Spanish people to continue the struggle for their liberation, and have kept that promise, so the Spanish people made a promise in their turn to the men from fifty-four nations who had come to fight for them. Speaking from the balcony in Poblet, Dr. Negrin said:

"Bon voyage! and continue the struggle in your own countries; tell your people the truth of what is happening in Spain, while here we maintain your struggle at the front. When there is a duty to accomplish, either one achieves it or he succumbs. We have a duty to accomplish, and that is to achieve for Spain a new future, a future more humane and more progressive. We will achieve it. Ten men may fall, a hundred, a thousand; but when an entire people wishes to conquer, it will never succumb, and it will conquer even at the price of the greatest sacrifices."

The men who heard him speak have no fear for the people of Spain. They do not feel that Spain is lost, or will be lost for very long. They lived a miracle of human solidarity and love in that country, and such solidarity, such love, can never be extinguished.

Hasta pronto, hermanos!

ALVAH BESSIE.

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FLIGHT

Bessie May and her mother hid in the church. "How come they doing all this?" the child asked. A short story by Robert Ramsey.

Bessie May crouched down in the hayfield by her mother.

"Where they gwine to now?" she said.

"Hush, chile," her mother said.

"You reckon ain't they ever going to git tired looking?"

"I don't know; Lawd knows they done looked enough already."

They waited, hidden in the field of ripe hay. Both of them watched the house. Their eyes were mute and tired, but unalarmed, as if they had long since passed beyond fear.

"Look," Bessie May said urgently. "Look what they done done now." They saw the men leaving the house; but spiring out of it behind them was a plume of smoke, a faint gray feather lifting up into the sunlight. They watched the men come over the field toward them, and when they looked at the smoke again it had grown fat and angry, and the windwhipped flames curled through the door. The men advanced steadily, the sunlight glinting from the shotgun barrels.

Bessie May heard the firing again in the distance, far off, like squirrel-hunting in the woods. She said, "Where you reckon papa and Uncle James at now?"

"I ain't studying papa and Uncle James none now," her mother said. "I studying how us gits out of this here hayfield without them seeing us."

Her mother's voice was a kind of rasping whisper, and looking at the men to see how close they were, Bessie May thought she was just mad, but when she looked back from the men, her mother had covered her nose and eyes with her hand, and she was making the snivelling sound again.

Bessie May looked at the house. The wind had rolled the fire down from the porch into the grass now, and it crept out in a fan toward the hay.

The men were close. They could hear their voices, and one of the men said, "I knowed Sam Pharr didn't have enough guts to shake a stick at. But I never knowed he wouldn't have enough not to turn tail and run as soon as he seen one nigger plumb acrost a field, with one shotgun in his hands, and that not even pointing nowhere clost to Sam—"

"No, sir; Sam ain't going to hear the last of that for twenty years," another said.

"Sam Pharr," the first man said, "he went and ruined his pants when he seen one scared nigger looking at him." All the others laughed, and then they were passing by. Bessie May looked at her mother, and her mother put out her hand and held her by the arm until the men had gone all the way across the field to the cars again.

"Praise Jesus," her mother said.

"You reckon papa and Uncle James all right, don't you?" Bessie May said.

"Chile, I don't know. I jes' ain't got no way of knowing."

There were other cars still going up and down the road all the time. They waited until the men from the field got in their cars and drove away, and then they watched until there were no other cars in sight, and they ran out of the strip of hay, bending low, running across an open space where the hay had been cut and raked. They got to the fence and climbed through the barbed wire and ran into the little patch of woods.

Then they stopped, just within the trees. The woman said, "I's glad they ain't got they dogs with them today anyway."

"But where we gwine to now?"

"I's got to study that a while."

"Ain't you hongry? I sho—"

"Hush, chile. Lemme study this here out awhile."

The cars were still passing on the road. Down through the trees and brush, Bessie May could see them going by in both directions. She said, "How come they don't jes' go on off somewhere, as long as they can't find nobody else nowhere?"

"Hush your mouth, chile, and lemme be awhile. . . . Look down yonder. You see that fire?" And Bessie May turned back and looked and saw the fire behind them; the wind had pushed it across the hayfield. The smoke had already come into the edge of the woods. "Now we's in for it, sho," her mother said. "How we gonter stay in here with that fire coming after us as fast as we can go?"

"Maybe if we was to go out on the road and stop one of them cars and tell them we ain't done nothing, they would—"

"Lawd have mercy, chile, Lawd have mercy—" The wind began to push the smoke down upon them. The fire had started on the brush and was moving in through the trees fast. Bessie May began to cough as the smoke thickened. Her mother took her hand and they started across the strip of woods. It was only about a quarter of a mile, and when they got to the other side, where the fields began again, they could see the church.

"I's sho hongry," Bessie May said. "I don't reckon I et nothing since last—"

"Jes' be quiet awhile," her mother said almost angrily. "Maybe we's gonter eat again somewhere." She was looking at the church. It was between them and the road, about a hundreds yards beyond the edge of the woods.

"Listen here. You hep me to look and see if they's any cars coming. When they ain't none, then we's gonter run into that church."

Bessie May tripped and sprawled upon the ground before they had run ten steps. Then she heard the car, and she thought her mother had gone on ahead, leaving her alone, and that they would see her from the car. She began to whimper. The car came down swiftly. She could see the road plain from where she was. There were no trees or brush between her and the road now. She kept flat on the ground and turned her head to look down the road. Then while she was wondering whether to turn her head again back the other way to look for her mother, the car rushed past safely, and her mother got up from the ground where she had hidden and came back and got Bessie May's hand and they ran on to the church.

When they got inside the church, Bessie May could see the foot caught through the window again. She had already seen it once, that morning when they ran out of their own house to go through the woods and hide in the empty house, before the men came to burn it and they had to hide again in the hayfield. Her mother said the men had hung the Negro by his foot from the window like that as a warning, after they blew off the top of his head with buckshot.

"Maybe if we was to jes' open the window up and let him fall down, we wouldn't—"

"And let them come by here in them cars and see he was done gone and know somebody'd been in here, and maybe come in here and look? Not us; we ain't gonter do nothing like that."

They went back past the pot-bellied iron stove and sat down near the altar. The wood for the stove was piled behind it on the floor, and there was a five-gallon can of coal oil by the wood.

Bessie May said, "How come they doing all this?"

And her mother looked at her a long time, until Bessie May thought she was not going to answer, that perhaps she had not even heard, and then she said:

"I reckon because they's afraid; them that's doing it anyway." And her mother crossed her arms upon her breast and she began to rock and moan with a sound of grief and weariness; and Bessie May waited for her to stop and tell her again what she had already known since morning and still did not understand, about how the Negroes had held meetings in the church at night for almost a year, believing in two men who traveled the country regions organizing the meetings and collecting money which they called dues and which they said were to defray the expenses of their travels, and how two white men came down finally to the meeting armed with rumors but no firearms and burst into the church in outrage, how one was shot in

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the excitement and the other escaped to bring down a furious posse upon the rest of the Negroes, beginning some time in the morning, marking the beginning with the Negro, hung head down from the church window with the brains running out of his opened skull to the ground, until they congealed and hung in shreds.

"They's plumb afraid, and they ain't gonter rest until every nigger in the county done dead or run into the bottom of the Miss'ippi river . . ."

Bessie May looked at the foot again. Her mother was rocking herself again, moaning; it made a sound like singing, sad and lost and grieving.

"Who that there, anyway?" Bessie May said. "That man there."

"Don't pay him no mind," her mother said. "He ain't for you to pay no mind to now."

"Can't we go nowhere else?"

"I figger this here's the best place to wait until night come on; I figger this is maybe the last place they gonter think to come and look, being as this is the place they started out with. Then it come night and we's gonter go out through the woods again."

"Whereabouts?"

"I don't know that yet. Jes' away from here."

But with the sudden and inexorable fatality of an evil nightmare the sound of the car mounted steadily into their ears; they heard it approach the churchyard and stop, and then the woman looked frantically through the one bare room enclosing them. Her eyes encompassed the circuit of the walls, the broken benches, the four windows, the cold stove; then they swung back to the door again, the entrance through which the men would presently appear, and then, speechless and urgent, she dragged the child back to the stove in the center of the room and thrust her inside the iron belly and closed the door upon her.

Bessie May felt the cold ashes beneath her and the cold metal encasing her wedged body; she heard nothing, and through the narrow slit in the grillework of the stove's door she saw the thin, segmentary vision of her mother kneeling on the floor, turning away from the door; then framed in the door came the wild, bearded, and sleepless faces.

Through the narrow frame she saw the figures massing, saw the fragmentary kneeling figure of her mother, and the metal barrel-glints of guns. Then the voices came angrily:

"Whereabouts are the rest of you black bastards hiding?"

"Nigger, are you one of them that had already picked out the house in town you were going to live in when all the white people had been kilt?"

"Where was the house you picked out?"

"I never picked out no house nowhere," the woman said.

"Where your menfolks now?"

"They ain't none of mine left," she said.

"Don't lie to us."

"They ain't none left," she said again; she lifted her face up a little, and her voice began quietly, "O Lawd, O Lawd—" and the shifting rays of light moved on metal behind her slowly; the sound swelled the room, quivering in the air with an unceasing roll, echoed and re-echoed in the ears of the girl, long after her mother had disappeared beneath the vision of the narrow stove grille; then she began to hear another sound merging into the smokedrifting horror of the dwindling gun-roar and presently she knew that it was the sound of her own strange voice, and she waited in the sudden silence, waiting not long, until she saw the massed figures shift in the thin frame, and she heard a step in the direction of the stove and then the creak of metal and the swirl of displaced liquid. Still waiting, she crouched in the embrace of the stove, her eyes going wild against the dark metal. Then the door swung open and the weight and fumes of the coal oil lashed her in the face and blinded her wild eyes. She screamed once and the fumes smothered her voice; then the matchflame flicked briefly; the stove shuddered as the fuming gas of the coal oil leaped up around her to meet the flame, and then space collapsed in thunder, and her soul burst unbounded into darkness, as the red sheet wrapped her body and rocked her into fury.

Afterward there was a silence, and outside the building in the dusk the sounds of evening grew, the insects and cricket song; slowly the choiring voices of the night came on.

ROBERT RAMSEY.

MAJOR NERTZ: *"In these critical days, my boy, it isn't enough simply to detest labor. You should join the Home Guard."*

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Strictly Personal

by RUTH McKENNEY

THE CONSISTENCY OF MR. HOWARD

ROY HOWARD may not be quite bright, but it is downright refreshing to know that he is at least consistent. I am aware that consistency is currently rated as a rather second-class, stuffy sort of virtue, but nevertheless, it affords me a certain innocent pleasure to reflect that you can always, but always and always, count on good old Roy making a prize ass of himself whenever he spills his personal opinions in public. Remember that trip he took around the world? Ha!

And Mr. Howard's latest excursion into *real politik* is a pippin, even for Roy who has made some of the monumental boners of newspaper history. You will remember the false armistice, the campaign against the soldier's bonus which cost him untold circulation, the Munich-is-the-beginning-of-real-world-peace opus, and a variety of similar speeches from the Scripps-Howard throne. But this time Mr. Howard makes his past, shall we say, mistakes, pale before the magnitude of today's whopper. In brief, in case you missed it, Mr. Howard thought that the Soviet Union signed that Japanese treaty owing to complete and terrifying weakness.

But of course I may be handing Mr. Howard a false dunce-cap. The New York *World-Telegram* carried an editorial article, unsigned, on its front page last week. The article coyly referred to Mr. Howard in the third person, and indeed, may have been written by some bond-servant down at West Street. But I am sure I cannot be mistaken in detecting the maestro's child-like hand scattered all through that interesting opus. For in the first place, the *World-Telegram* does not carry editorial articles on its first page without the approval of Messrs. Howard. And in the second place, I am an old student of Mr. Howard's style. If that little opus in the *World-Telegram* was not pure, uncontaminated Howard, I will eat Mr. Howard's hat, or better yet, Mr. Howard himself.

After all, who else on the *World-Telegram* would begin an article on the Soviet-Japanese pact with a wistful paragraph recalling that great moment of Joseph Stalin, when he sat face to face with Roy Howard. If you didn't see the piece, you will be interested to know that from that moment on, Mr. Stalin's fortunes began to decline. He had achieved the peak. Roy Howard had interviewed him. There was nothing much else left. As the *World-Telegram* said, Mr. Howard had left Joseph Stalin a powerful, nay, a popular man. Five years later, poor old Stalin is down at the railroad station, making friends with Matsuoka. Mr. Howard, it is clear, feels a gentle melancholy when he thinks of Stalin. Five years ago, interviewed by the head of the Scripps-Howard chain. Today, nothing.

And if you think I am exaggerating, look it up for yourself. In addition to these piquant opinions, the *World-Telegram* article also expressed a brisk contempt for the Soviet army, navy, air force, government, and people. It seems that the army is equipped, practically speaking, with bows and arrows, in addition to having no generals worth the name—they executed Tukhachevsky, you remember. The Soviet navy could do with a few of those Central Park rowboats. The air force operates mostly on paper. And, of course, the Russian people are peasants, and you know peasants.

The Q.E.D. of this pessimistic appraisal of Soviet power is, naturally (vide Mr. Howard), the Japanese pact. It seems that the Soviet boys were simply scared silly of Japan, and so they begged and pleaded and gnashed their teeth and finally the Japanese broke down and gave them their old treaty.

Ho, hum. Compared to this bright little article, the false armistice of 1918 was a right smart piece of reporting. For Mr. Howard has overlooked an obvious question: if the Japanese were so powerful and the Soviet strength was so little, why didn't the Japanese army toddle right into Outer Mongolia and from there go on through Siberia? Don't tell me the Japanese ruling caste loves peace and doesn't want Vladivostok! I can just hear Matsuoka telling the boys in the army office before he left, "Boys, we all know Soviet Russia is a push-over! Shucks, we could bounce right in there and get clear to Moscow before they knew it. But would that be nice?"

And then all the Japanese generals shake their heads. "No, no," say the generals. "It wouldn't be one bit nice. Not fair. Not cultured. We must not take advantage of Soviet Russia, even if they are building socialism there and own quite a few oil wells and gold mines and deep water ports. No, Matsuoka, you go to Moscow and tell them we will give them a treaty saying we won't attack them. After all, good neighbors are good neighbors!"

Yes, I can just see that affecting scene. The Japanese generals are such sentimentalists.

But if the Japanese generals (this to Mr. Howard) *didn't* make the Soviet treaty out of Christian charity, could it possibly be they signed it because they have an extremely healthy respect for the Soviet army? I would not want to doubt your word, Mr. Howard, you understand, but is it in the least probable that the Japanese have been seeking this little treaty for the past three years, ever since that unfortunate "border incident" up in Mongolia? You will remember, Mr. Howard, that the Japanese and Russian armies fought an engagement up there. The whole thing was just a mistake, of course; the Japanese army somehow wandered across the border and the Soviet army, not understanding the generals were just lost, nipped off a little battle. The results were extremely distasteful, Mr. Howard, in case you have forgotten, to the Japanese army. In fact, to be brutally accurate, the Soviet soldiers simply wiped the floor with those poor lost Japanese. The Japanese survivors of that mistaken expedition straggled back home with nary a tank, an airplane, a gun, nor even so much as a fire-cracker to call their own. Most annoying. And, Mr. Howard, you may not believe it, in fact you make clear you don't, but nevertheless the Japanese generals, who have a respectable army themselves, do not consider the Soviet army easy pickings. Somehow, they seem to have learned so much about the socialist armed forces that, in spite of their appetite for conquest, they have been moving heaven and earth for years to sign this very treaty of last week. The boys in Tokyo somehow seem to think anything at all was better than another little battle with the Red Army.

Which all goes to show you, of course, what dopes the Japanese generals are. If Roy Howard were on the business end of the Tokyo foreign office, he'd do things plenty differently, you bet. I can see him snapping his fingers at Soviet aviators and sneering a pretty sneer at the Soviet government. "Come on, pushovers," he'd scream at daily intervals to the Soviet ambassador. "We can lick your weight in tigers. Let's have Mongolia, shrimp, before we have to come in and take it."

Yes, Roy Howard would make things hum around the Soviet-Japanese border, for he doesn't believe any of that propaganda about a united socialist people, the strongest army in the world, the largest air force, and the second largest industrial plant in the world. No, sir, you can't take Roy Howard in with that kind of Communist nonsense. He knows better. If *he* had been Matsuoka—.

But then, maybe there is a gap between theory and practice. Maybe even Roy Howard would appraise Soviet strength slightly differently if he were a Japanese general. For that matter, maybe dear old Roy is not as fanciful as he sounds. Maybe he really knows better about the Soviet Union but is afraid to admit that a socialist economy can defend itself against all comers.

Maybe Roy doesn't want to spoil his reputation for consistency. Who knows?

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★

Hitler's Next Steps

WITH the thirteen-day conquest of Yugoslavia, and the reduction of the Anglo-Greek forces to the very water's edge of the Aegean Sea, the first phase of the spring military campaign is coming to a close. Taken together with the recapture of Libya, the Nazis have scored a powerful victory, one which raises their odds in the struggle for Suez. It is true that Hitler was compelled to fight for something he had already gained by diplomacy; true also, his losses in highly trained man-power and expensive equipment must have been substantial, and there were invisible losses in terms of the profound upheaval among the Balkan peoples, the severe dislocation of the Danubian economy, with its grain fields, metal mines, and oil on which Germany depends. The short-run gain, however, is all Hitler's. The appetites of his vassal cronies can now be satisfied at the expense of the living body of Yugoslavia: Mussolini takes a section of the Dalmatian coast, Hungary has reoccupied the Banat, the Bulgarian army has taken over Macedonia. The last vestiges of Versailles disappear, with only skeletons of men and machines to mark the spot.

Strategically, the Nazis have gained commanding positions against the entire Mediterranean basin. Whether they try to gain Suez from Libya, whether they combine a thrust through Egypt with intense air warfare over Britain's sea bases, whether they are compelled to come round by way of Turkey the fact remains that the Nazis have the psychological advantage and the military initiative. Since there is no evidence that the Turkish army would do better than the Yugoslavs against a full fledged German assault, we must assume that the Turkish leaders are once again weighing their alliance with Britain. They face the same decisions which occupied most of the fall and winter months in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the only difference being that Turkey commands the southern shore of the Black Sea, of vital interest to the USSR. What happens in Turkey therefore is a problem not only in Anglo-Turkish relations, but a problem in German-Soviet relations.

In Iraq, where the big oil regions are, the military *coup d'etat* seems to have been inspired by the Nazi advance on the other side of the Dardanelles; it may also represent native nationalist elements who do not wish their country to become the plaything of opposing imperialist forces; evidently, it is serious enough for the British to be sending substantial troops up the Tigris and Euphrates valley. Another significant repercussion of the German success is taking place in France. Discussions for "collaboration" were resumed last week between the Vice-Premier Admiral Darlan and German representatives. It is not hard to see why. In proportion as Nazi armies approach Suez, they approach Syria also; the relative independence of French policy can no longer be maintained; British reverses tend to close the possibility of any major sections of the French empire going over to Churchill's side, and the problem for the Vichy government is to get the best possible terms. Necessarily, German advances in the eastern Mediterranean have their implications for Spain. It would not be surprising if motorized divisions soon make their appearance below Gibraltar on their way down the west coast of Africa.

BRITISH NEWSPAPERS are preparing their public for bad news. In the United States, there has been a noticeable increase in pessimism, and many commentators are confessing that Colonel Donovan's diplomatic sortie in the Balkans was a failure. The whole purpose of the British intervention in Greece, it is now admitted, was to gain time; regrets are being expressed that not quite enough time was gained. Thus two tendencies begin to crystallize somewhat sharply in the American ruling class: first, a demand for "all-out" assistance to Britain, from convoys to an actual declaration of war; second, a more cautious tendency, which capitalizes on the crisis by demanding greater speed in fascization at home, but confines aid to Britain to such forms as would benefit American imperialism in case the British Tories reconsider their entire position later on this year.

Pact with Canada

THE latest agreement with Canada is a perfect example of the dual character of American imperialist strategy. On the face of it, the coordination of the Canadian and American rearmament programs facilitates "aid to Britain"; but it does so in such a way, that should the British ruling class try to reconsider its relations with Germany later this year, the empire's most industrialized dominion will be more securely in Wall Street's grip. The agreement is a secret one, but it is not difficult to divine some of the ground it covers. For one thing, there is the matter of opening the seaport of Halifax to American shipping: this would advance Mr. Roosevelt's program of sending convoys up past Greenland, Iceland, and over to Scotland. Another problem is to adjust Canadian production methods to conform with American rather than British specifications. Canada does not produce completed airplanes, for example; she does not produce heavy artillery. The British require certain specifications, for which American parts often do not fit. The chances are that the discussions between Mackenzie King, the Canadian premier, and the President went over some of this ground.

But the most important problems are financial. Britain has been compelling Canada to pay for her own rearmament as well as most of her production for Britain. Canada finds it hard to pay: first, one-fourth her population is stricken by the severe agricultural crisis, second, because both Britain and the USA have cut down their purchases of Canadian goods. Moreover, the Canadian ruling class does not wish to pay for Britain's war effort when that country is getting what she wants in this country under the lend-lease program. Mr. Roosevelt expects to give Canada financial assistance out of the lend-lease, or the Export-Import Bank appropriations; Wall Street will get a mortgage on Canada's raw materials resources, a firmer grip on Canada's economy and political orientation. The working class of Canada, which must pay for the contradictions among its masters, will learn that Mr. Roosevelt's program demands a heavy price. American workers are learning that lesson quickly.

Coal Miners' Unity

"NATIONAL UNITY" is a much abused term. Evidently in the opinion of the administration and its big business backers, it is reserved for the exclusive use of war demagogues. When organized labor actually contributes to the unity of the nation, the "men of substance" bitterly resist.

Take the case of the United Mine Workers. Union demands for the elimination of the differential between wages paid in Northern and Southern coal fields are, to put it mildly, most unwelcome to President Roosevelt and the non-labor press. Yet not so long ago the President himself described the South as America's economic problem Number 1. The cause of Southern ills has long been clear—the carefully guarded low standard of living has been used to maintain pay levels far below even the inadequate wages of the North.

The United Mine Workers have struck a blow against this abuse. Armed violence against them, even murder of UMW members, cannot weaken their resolve to protect the union, to end the inequality of the Southern miners before returning to work even in the Northern mines. They are determined, John L. Lewis warned, "to starve together if they are going to starve at all."

Recent strikes in industry have gained improved working conditions, better wages, stronger union organization. Now the United Mine Workers, having forced agreement from the Northern operators to their economic demands, press the struggle against the system of semi-slavery in the South. It has been pointed out that their fight today is as crucial, as significant, as the struggle for the eight-hour day by railroad workers during the last war. Like Wilson before him, President Roosevelt's devotion to democracy does not lead him to support just demands of the working class. Rather, the President tries to balk

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the union: a few weeks ago, he privately opposed wage increases in steel; now he gives comfort to the Southern operators who refuse to accede to the UMW. Perhaps he, like David Lawrence in the New York *Sun*, realizes that "once the wage differential is eliminated in coal, it furnishes a basis for agitation in all Southern industries. . . ." Unity is a fine thing. But to the administration that does *not* include unity of workers, North and South, for their mutual benefit and for the benefit of all the people suffering under the starvation standards below the Mason-Dixon line.

Shifting Battlegrounds

WHILE the United Mine Workers broke new ground, the Steel Workers Organizing Committee also set an important precedent. The triumphant signing of the contract with the US Steel Corp. raised wages ten cents an hour and provided improvement of working conditions. Even more significant, it assured for the first time in the steel industry a basic wage for women equal to that of the men. Moreover, success in Big Steel convinced other operators, including Bethlehem, Weir's National Steel, and Youngstown Sheet & Tube, that they would be wise to raise wages to meet the new levels.

The SWOC contract closes one phase of the national attack by the administration and industry against organization and wage standards. By holding firm, labor advanced after each major engagement. Now members of the United Automobile Workers in the General Motors plants demand higher pay against rising living costs, and a new contract protecting workers against company abuses.

But labor's success in the first battles does not mean that the administration or the industrialists are willing to call off the war. There are other ways to smash the unions besides violence, OPM threats, compulsory mediation plans, and lockouts. For example, there is restrictive legislation: the House Naval Affairs Committee favorably reported the Vinson no-strike bill after hearing very few witnesses—one of them Secretary of Navy Knox who favored the bill. The build-up was carefully prepared ahead of time. William Knudsen, OPM director, called strikes "criminal." Government labor spies at the Bridges trial in San Francisco were permitted to indulge in the wildest Red-baiting. The House Rules Committee approved a new "investigation" of strikes and unions conducted by the poll-tax Representative Vinson of Georgia. Representative Ford of California introduced a bill imposing twenty-five years' imprisonment for any person joining a strike in defense industry, the death penalty if anyone is killed (by either side) in the course of the strike. And numerous other anti-labor attacks included lengthy remarks by Secretary Stimson at a press conference to the effect that "History shows also that these disputes may get out of the control of local authorities and make it necessary for the States to fall back on the Guard to maintain law and order."

The heat is on. Undoubtedly the Vinson bill is the most menacing threat to labor thus far. It enforces a "cooling off" period to break strikes, freezes the open shop, modifies the National Labor Relations Act so that it would no longer have meaning. It would "seriously endanger the future existence" of the CIO, warned President Murray. Even William Green had to condemn the bill—and local AFL unions have expressed their strongest opposition. Like all other blows against labor, the measure has far wider significance than its effect on the unions. For without a strong labor movement there can be no democracy.

The TWU Fights Jim Crow

TOO often, organized labor is considered no more than a bargaining agency interested in winning better conditions and higher wages for its membership. Such goals are vital and significant. But in addition, progressive unionism can contribute specifically to the political and social scene. In New York City last week, the Transport Workers Union, which has done so much for taxi, subway, and bus workers (so much, indeed, that the union is under continual attack from the state legislature, the city government, and the press) won a victory with implications far wider than the direct benefits it brings to a handful of workers.

In conjunction with the National Negro Congress, the Harlem Labor Union, and the Greater New York Coordinating Committee for Employment, the union conducted a boycott campaign against the city's two major bus companies which refused to hire Negroes. The boycott broke down discrimination. The companies signed an agreement to hire 100 Negro bus drivers and seventy Negro maintenance men before taking on other new employees. The Negroes are to be hired on an equal basis with the whites. Thereby the union struck a blow at racial discrimination, the shame of America. Once again, CIO shows what it means by its insistence on the defense of democracy. For that which is worth defending must first be given content.

The "Bomb Plot" Again

NEARLY a year ago Philadelphia police, claiming they had received an anonymous phone call, searched the Workers School and found a time bomb. They did not investigate the phone call or the manufacture of the bomb. Instead they arrested two men, Adolph Heller, a director of the school, and Bernard Rush, a student, who were charged with possession of the bomb. At their trial, which ended last week in a conviction, the evidence presented was purely circumstantial and very flimsy. But Judge Curtis Bok, a Roosevelt Democrat, harangued the jury about Communism and "violence," with side cracks at the Soviet Union. The learned judge made Communism the issue even while he instructed the jury that it wasn't. Thus he completed the dirty work begun last June by Moe Annenberg, whose Philadelphia *Inquirer* started the "bomb plot" scare by linking the bomb found in the Workers School with a mythical conspiracy to blow up the Republican National Convention. Mr. Annenberg, who had been found guilty of trying to bilk the government of $5,000,000 income taxes, was seconded in his campaign against the Workers School and "Reds" by one William Randolph Hearst. Now Judge Bok has added the final touch. But has he? The defense has filed a motion for a new trial, and the protest against this latest "Philadelphia story" grows in Pennsylvania and nationally.

The frameup of Heller and Rush was denounced as "the Mooney case of World War II" by the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties at its week-end conference in Washington. Two hundred delegates drew up a program of action to protect civil rights. Included in this program, besides a campaign against the Philadelphia frameup, are plans for countering the administration's many anti-labor, anti-democratic measures. Delegates went on record for a nationwide campaign to free Earl Browder. The parley ended with a mass meeting addressed by Edwin S. Smith, NLRB member, Clifford T. McAvoy, New York City's deputy commissioner of welfare, and Harold Christoffel, president of the Allis-Chalmers local of the United Automobile Workers.

See You May Day

WE'LL be looking for you along the line of march on May Day. It may be hard to find you among the many thousands but we hope you'll find us. We'll be somewhere near the NEW MASSES float, which, we are assured by the artists working on it, will be the best one in the line. And from all indications there will be many. This May Day bids to be the greatest in history. The United May Day Conference held the other day in New York represented 238,093 organized workers. Other organizations that have since indicated their desire to participate will bring the number to 350,000. Twenty-nine CIO and fifteen AFL unions will march officially in the parade.

No wonder the number mounts to this unprecedented total. For never, since World War days, did May Day mean so much as it does today. Americans will march to safeguard their civil rights, their labor gains. They will demonstrate their desire for peace. They know that their enemies carefully watch the size and spirit of May Day as an index to the temper of the people. And Americans will not be the only ones observing the day. As you read these lines, men in Europe, in Asia, all over the world, are preparing for the big day. Underground, in Hitler Germany, in Churchill India, in France, in Spain, wherever terror has prevented the open expression of the people's will, they are running off the secret leaflets. They are writing words in many languages today, slogans for peace and freedom, and on May Day these words will be heard around the world.

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More on the Soviet-Japanese Pact

Now that a full week has passed it is possible to get a better focus on the Soviet-Japanese neutrality agreement. Most observers emphasized that the agreement came as no surprise; there has been almost none of the high moral pretense and outraged innocence such as marked the reception of changed relations between the Soviet Union and Germany seventeen months ago. Only the most discredited sections of American opinion, the most rabid Social Democrats still have the gall to blame their own impotence and all the world's ills on the Soviet Union. Official and semi-official circles expressed their chagrin at the pact by trying to minimize rather than exaggerate its meaning. The *New Republic,* for example, went to some pains to prove that the agreement between the USSR and Japan hardly changed matters. The *Nation* said nothing at all; evidently its pipelines were busted. Walter Lippmann, once a foremost exponent of appeasing Japan, felt that the Anglo-American position in the Far East was being outflanked. He also opined that the USSR had suffered a defeat; it had been outsmarted and surrounded by false friends. When a case-hardened observer like Walter Lippmann thinks the USSR is in danger, sympathizers of socialism are naturally reassured. Quite clearly the gentleman has been hurt in his solar plexus.

IT IS NOT DIFFICULT to recapitulate what the rulers of Japan hope to gain from this pact, although whether they do so remains to be seen. The Prince Konoye-Matsuoka group that has come to power in the past half year hopes to calm internal opposition, those elements who hesitated to embark on adventures in cooperation with Hitler before normalizing relations with the USSR. Secondly, they hope to increase their campaign within China for a capitulation: as NEW MASSES readers know, much of the trouble within China's United Front has come from pro-Japanese elements. Thirdly, Japan expects to press for economic advantages in French Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies. The press dispatches also emphasize the point Joseph Starobin made in his article last week: Japan hopes to exploit the pact in the sharper bargaining with Britain and the United States, which the Matsuoka group has by no means abandoned. It would be untrue to say that the pact serves as the signal for, nor is it the beginning of, a southward expansion. This expansion has been long under way. It is true, however, that the occasion and form of that expansion depend on Hitler's successes in Europe: if these successes continue, Japan will intensify her bid for colonial empire at the expense of those imperialisms which are suffering defeat. Needless to say, the Soviet Union bears no responsibility at all in this regard. Responsibility for the imperialist conflict lies within the imperialist system. It was the democracies so-called, against the will of their peoples, who gave, and are still giving, Japan the oil, scrap iron, copper, and markets for textiles, the positions from which to threaten a revision of all relations in the south Pacific. And those people who charge that the USSR delights in "fomenting war" among the capitalist powers are usually the ones who are most anxious that the United States keep the war going and get into it.

THE AGREEMENT has not changed the status quo for China, most reliable observers agreed. And there were press reports of specific Soviet assurances to this effect. But some columnists, like Samuel Grafton, in the New York *Post,* have chattered away about an imminent "division of China." These are gentlemen who never got over the German-Soviet pact, and learned neither history nor Marxism from it. China is a very different country from Poland historically, and in every other respect. There is nothing analogous in the Far East to the *cordon sanitaire,* the creatures of Versailles which existed in eastern Europe. The USSR liberated western Ukraine and Byelo-Russia because the era of Versailles was over. There is no basis for similar events in the Far East.

Nevertheless, it is true that China's United Front has been weakened in the past year, due to conflicting foreign pressures, among them the contradictory diplomacy of the White House, as well as the fear of the Chinese national bourgeoisie of its own workers and peasants. The question arises of what Soviet policy would be in the eventuality of a complete breakdown of the United Front. It would be presumptive to answer that question off-hand. There is every likelihood that China's democratic masses, under the leadership of Communist and left-Kuomintang patriotic elements, would carry forth their resistance to Japanese imperialism on as national a scale as possible. Since this resistance is likely to be strongest precisely in those areas which Japan covets most, it is impossible to visualize Soviet-Japanese cooperation at China's expense.

Finally, the question is raised as to whether the treaty represents a recognition of Manchukuo, Japan's first conquest in China. The terms of the agreement seem to have been deliberately worded to avoid formal recognition of Japan's puppet; there is a mutual pledge of "respect" for "the territorial integrity and inviolability" of both Manchukuo and the Outer Mongolian People's Republic —rather natural, is it not, in view of the fact that so much conflict has taken place on the borders of these areas? It comes in distinct bad faith for anyone to worry whether the USSR has recognized Manchukuo when most of the capitalist world helped Japan conquer this region and long ago accorded it *de facto* recognition by carrying on trade there.

Bourgeois editorialists were puzzled by the significance of the agreement for Germany. The New York *Times* explained it all as a great victory for Hitler; the very next day it changed its mind, pointing out that the agreement was signed outside of the framework of the Axis. Some people even speculate that the USSR deliberately "freed itself" in the Far East for action against Germany in Europe. Actually, Japan has had formal commitments to Germany since last September. It is significant, however, that the rulers of Japan did not feel free to project cooperation with Hitler until they had clarified relations with the USSR—which reflects on the strength of their ties with Germany. Secondly, it would be just as wrong to think the USSR is deliberately moving to war with Germany as it is to think that the USSR is allied with Germany. It is not afraid of Hitler. It is not appeasing him. It is pursuing a policy of neutrality and peace—difficult for some people to understand, but true, and mighty successful.

THE MAGNITUDE of this new victory for the Soviet Union will be understood if we remember the long decade of intense anti-Soviet hostility in Japan, the thousands of border incidents and the two summers of large scale war. The whole program of Japanese imperialism went forward in the name of "anti-Communism." British and American statesmen long believed that by appeasing Japan, they might yet get her to embarrass the USSR in a serious way. Moreover, Japanese politicians always insisted that political relations with the USSR be normalized only *after* economic concessions in the Sakhalin oil fields and the Kamchatka fisheries. The USSR has always placed the conclusion of normalized political relations *before* improved and stable economic relations. It has insisted upon that position, and with this pact, Matsuoka and Prince Konoye agree to do something which half a dozen previous Japanese Cabinets refused to do. In a larger sense, the USSR has compelled its rapacious and predatory neighbors to do what British and American imperialism still decline to do—namely recognize her neutrality and weight in world affairs. This has required strength in diplomacy, firmness and forthrightness—which statesmen of what nation can assure their peoples that they are capable of the same?

Finally, the pact raises the question of the future of American policy in the Far East. Do the American people realize where a pernicious man like Sumner Welles, an overconfident gambler like Franklin D. Roosevelt are getting us? Having appeased Japan, they now prepare to fight her. They have snubbed the USSR, tried to buy off Japan at her expense—and now, they ask the people to carry on two wars in different parts of the world at the price of their living standards and very lives. Only a complete change will save us from the same ignominy and horror which Chamberlain and Churchill brought on the men and women of Britain.

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SAMMY GLICK AND JOHNNY DOBREJCAK

Two Americans and where they went. Samuel Sillen reviews "Out of This Furnace" and "What Makes Sammy Run?" Two distinguished novels.

OUT OF THIS FURNACE, *by Thomas Bell. Little, Brown and Co. $2.50.*
WHAT MAKES SAMMY RUN? *by Budd Schulberg. Random House. $2.50.*

OFFHAND, it would appear incongruous to group these two excellent novels. They are poles apart in subject matter and fictional treatment. Thomas Bell's story deals with three generations of Slovak workers in the steel mills of Braddock and Homestead. Budd Schulberg's first novel portrays the sensational rise of a rugged individualist from copy boy to Hollywood executive. Bell identifies himself completely with his proletarian characters, and he treats their struggles for a wage and human dignity with tenderness, respect, and a shining faith in ultimate victory. Schulberg studies that hopped-up motor named Sammy Glick with horrified fascination. One novel burns with a lyrical glow; the other is almost clinical in its ironic detachment.

But there is a deep core of identity between the books, an underlying unity of attitude. Taken together they form an interesting complementary picture of American life. They define alternative ways of hitting back at a social order which staggers along on topsy-turvy standards, cynically indifferent to human values.

Kracha, Dubik, Mike Dobrejcak, the immigrant workers of Bell's story are victims of the same forces which have corroded Sammy Glick's East Side family. Both groups had come to America seeking freedom, and both suffered from the cruel denial of freedom. Young Johnny Dobrejcak (or Dobie, to use the third-generation version) is as sensitive to the taunts of "Hunky" in the dirty alleys of Braddock as Sammy is to the catcalls of "Sheenie" in P. S. 15. Dobie's father was killed in a blast furnace explosion; and Papa Glick had to pick up pennies as a cantor in a poor synagogue because he would not be a scab foreman in a glasscutters' sweat shop. Dobie and Sammy alike are fiercely resentful of the impoverished, ghetto-like existence into which they were born; and both are determined to break through it.

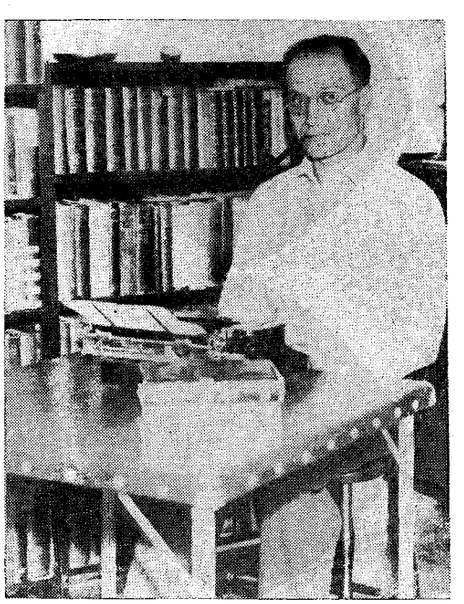
The similarity of their backgrounds heightens the radical opposition of their careers. Dobie, remaining a worker and taking pride in his working class inheritance, helps organize the steel mills. The great successes of the CIO are the answer to five decades of discrimination and exploitation. "Out of this furnace, this metal." Dobie's strength is the strength of millions. But Sammy accepts the dog-eat-dog ethics that he sees operating in capitalist society, and he decides to be a swifter, shrewder, more voracious dog than any of the others. His career, we are told in a withering final sentence, is "a blueprint of a way of life that was paying dividends in America in the first half of the twentieth century." He runs and runs and runs, knocking over frailer bodies, getting bigger and better jobs, cashing in on the big money, faster, faster, faster. And he gets everywhere —and nowhere.

One reason why *Out of This Furnace* is such an excellent proletarian novel is that it places the lives of workers in a historical perspective. Where it might have been tempting to deal exclusively with the dramatic SWOC campaigns in the middle thirties, Bell has insisted on showing the continuity of struggles in steel over half a century. As a result, the reader, like Dobie, has a sense of proud heritage. The roots strike deep. There has been a tendency in American proletarian fiction to treat labor struggles as isolated events suddenly flaring into life rather than as expressions of a historical process. The mechanical "conversion" ending, from which a number of novels have suffered, was partly due to a failure to understand the simple—and momentous—fact that the proletariat has a rich history which shapes and gives meaning and depth to its present experience. Thomas Bell's novel is infused with this important truth. Even though he has not solved all the structural problems raised by this type of novel—there are breaks in the narrative which are only incompletely bridged—and even though the earlier part of his story has less firmness and dramatic unity than the latter part, Bell has made a noteworthy advance from which other writers will be sure to profit.

The main characters of the novel's four sections are Djuro Kracha, his daughter Mary and her husband Mike Dobrejcak, and their son Dobie. There is a steady and natural progression in the degree of proletarian consciousness achieved by each of these generations. Kracha, who comes to America in 1881, toils in the mills twelve hours a day and seven days a week, he notes that he loses twice as much in bad times as he is able to save in "good" times, he sees his best friend Dubik killed in what only the company has the heart to call an "accident"; but he takes no active part in the great conflicts with Carnegie and Frick. He sets himself up in a butcher business, only to be wiped out. In his affair with Zuska he seeks some escape from an unhappy life. He tells young Mike Dobrejcak to think what he likes but to keep his mouth shut.

But Mike has the rebelliousness of a younger immigrant who insists on his right to a full life. He has none of Kracha's ability to shrug his shoulders and live to himself in fatalistic acknowledgment that the world is at best a pretty poor affair for a worker, an immigrant, and a "Hunky" to boot. Mike hates poverty and ugliness. He has a lively, questioning intelligence; he is proud of his work even though he despises those who make profits out of it; he wants time to live and learn. Acutely conscious of class distinctions, he understands who is to blame for the contrast between the high hopes entertained by him and Mary during their courtship and the actual drudgery to which Mary was committed when she was forced to take in boarders to help pay the rent. Mike registers Republican in 1912, but he secretly votes for Debs, humiliated in turn by his fear of exposure and by his realization that the only reason why he isn't punished is that he represents too puny a force. And just before he is killed, he is troubled by the question whether workers will ever have enough strength and courage to rise against a system which denies them their human portion of comfort and beauty and peace, not realizing that "he himself was all the proof and hope he needed."

It is Dobie who lives to see that great moment in the fifty-year struggle to free the



THOMAS BELL *was born in a Pennsylvania steel town in 1903. Like the characters of his novel,* "Out of This Furnace," *he is of Slovak ancestry. Son of a steelworker, Bell went to work in the mills at fifteen, became an electrician by trade. His first success,* "All Brides Are Beautiful," *was published in 1936.*

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steel towns when the CIO triumphed. That moment, as Dobie realizes, is only the beginning of a new struggle. The job wasn't finished. But union men were striding past the cops with union buttons on their caps, "and no knightly plume had ever been worn more proudly or celebrated a greater victory." Dobie had every right to think: "We've come a long way, hey Pop?"

The story of these generations is told with remarkable simplicity and warmth. One reads

BUDD SCHULBERG *graduated from Dartmouth in 1936. He has been an active screenwriter ever since.* "What Makes Sammy Run?" *is his first published novel.*

it with a deepening sense of pride in being identified with the Dubiks and Dobrejcaks of this world. For this is a confident book, stirring in its human affirmations. There is suffering in it, of course:—"the maimed and the destroyed, the sickly who died young, the women worn out before their time with work and child-bearing, all the thousands of lives the mills had consumed as surely as they had consumed their tons of coke and ore." But this is anything but a bleak story, anything but a picture of pitiable people buffeted about by superior and inexorable powers. There is in it the gaiety of the people which no system can finally crush, the folk witticism which triumphs in the darkest hour because it is not merely smart but based on a full-hearted acceptance of life, the love of Dubik for Dorta, of Mike for Mary, of Dobie for Julie, the unshatterable loyalties of the common men and women who alone have the stamina and bravery and eagerness to inherit this earth.

A similar attitude, I feel, is implicit in Budd Schulberg's *What Makes Sammy Run?* This is not, as the reviewers would have it, the story of a "heel." You may call him that if you wish, but you must also recognize the deeper truth that Sammy is capitalism stripped of its pretensions and hypocrisies. He is an utterly frank—and because he is frank, an utterly fascinating—exponent of the doctrine: "Every man for himself and let the devil take the hindmost." Sammy is not unique; as one of his most astute critics in the book says: "he has plenty of soul-mates running in the same race." And the fierce logic with which he steps over everybody else's dead body to get where he is going, taking credit for scripts he never wrote, trying to break up the Screen Writers Guild, marrying into social prestige, scorning the Jews with the cynicism of a storm trooper—the fierce logic of his rise to Hollywood fame and fortune is unassailable, unless you take a revolutionary view of his premises.

Schulberg has taken the right tone in describing this dividend-paying way of life. His satire cuts deep; his style has unusual economy and speed. While employing devices borrowed from the "hard-boiled" school of Cain and O'Hara, his work is rescued from their sophisticated pessimism by a healthy undertow of feeling. His merciless attack on a Hollywood which too often rewards the phony and insincere is tempered by an appreciation of honest screen writers like Dudley Nichols and other progressive, union-conscious men and women in the industry. Schulberg has also very consciously and successfully barred the way to anti-Semitic interpretations of his story by contrasting Sammy with the narrator, Al Manheim, and the other Jewish characters, and by showing the non-Jewish Sammy Glicks in action. The scope of the novel is not large, and occasionally one feels that Schulberg overdoes the Scotch-drinking and the brittle patter of John O'Hara. But nobody can mistake the skill with which this young novelist has ripped away any illusions that may still prevail regarding commercial success in this epoch of peace and plenty. *What Makes Sammy Run?* is a brilliant counterpart to Thomas Bell's distinguished novel.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Far East

THE STRUGGLE FOR NORTH CHINA, *by Paul E. Taylor. $2;* THE CHINESE ARMY, *by Evans Fordyce Carlson. $1;* JAPAN SINCE 1931, *by Hugh Borton. $1.25;* CANADA AND THE FAR EAST, *by A. R. M. Lower. $1.25. All published by the Institute of Pacific Relations.*

UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD CHINA, *edited by Paul Hibbert Clyde. Duke University Press. $3.50.*

IN THE latest four monographs of the Inquiry Series, the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations maintains its tradition of topical subject matter handled with high scholarly standards. Of necessity, their appeal will be largely to advanced students. But for the layman who wishes to dig a bit below the headlines, these books will be equally valuable.

Paul E. Taylor investigates the kind of government the Japanese attempted to establish after their rapid military occupation of the Yellow River region in the fall and winter of 1937. The invaders tried to replace their military control of key cities and railways by a stable regime. They recruited native Chinese officials, and developed the Hsin Min Chu I, an ideology based on anti-Communism and the manifest destiny of Japan to rule the Oriental peoples, an ideology calculated to replace Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles. The record of their failure is essentially the story of how the Shansi-Hopei-Chahar Border government was organized by the Eighth Route Army in alliance with other democratic nationalist elements.

Why the Chinese Communists succeeded and how they did so is the meat of Evans Fordyce Carlson's study of *The Chinese Army.* NEW MASSES readers will recall the chapter reprinted in our issue of Oct. 8, 1940. How the peasants of North China rallied to the Border government, and carried forth their resistance to the very gates of Peiping is one of the great tales of mass heroism in our time. The Yellow River region is quite distinct from the rest of China; in any breakup of the United Front it would play a decisive role. Dr. Taylor capitalizes the advantage of his personal experience; his study is well organized and strongly written.

Dr. Borton's monograph supplies a much needed analysis of Japan's social and economic life in these ten years of its main struggle for Asiatic empire. The role of the military bureaucracy, the influence of the patriotic societies, the intervention of the state in transforming Japan's economy for war, and its resultant effects on living standards and health of the people, along with the decline of parliamentary government, form the subject matter of this book. Much of the material is derivative, and the writing often lacks incisive generalization. But for those who have yet to begin a systematic study of what makes Japan go, it will be helpful.

Somewhat tangential, and for that reason doubly interesting, is A. R. M. Lower's discussion of Canada and the Far East. It is not generally realized to what extent Anglo-American support for Japan in recent years has expressed itself indirectly as well as directly: much of Japanese imports of copper, scrap-iron, nickel, and lumber have come from Canadian corporations controlled by Wall Street and London. On the other hand, and this is the merit of Dr. Lower's treatment, a great deal of the world support for China has come from the Canadian people, from its medical men, its church bodies, and its press. The author dips back occasionally into historical backgrounds; he is very alert to Canada's specific and growing role in Pacific affairs. His writing is leisurely and informative.

Paul Hibbert Clyde's compilation of documents covering one hundred years of *United States Policy Toward China* is not more than it claims to be; but those who can read documents imaginatively will find a revelation of just how American imperialist policy developed since the days when Caleb Cushing got our first treaty with the Tsa Ting empire. The admixture of moral concern for the

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"heathen Chinee" and the hard core of material interest in the China trade is not hard to discover and separate. From the very first, the rivalries among the great powers stand out emphatically in the memoranda and writings of American representatives in China. The selection is heavily balanced in favor of the formative years of American policy. But the sparseness of the post-world war material does not prevent the keen reader from discovering the motivations and rationale of American imperialism in Asia.

LEONARD WOOD.

Dish of Despair

IN THIS OUR LIFE, *by Ellen Glasgow. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.50.*

THIS is not the first time that Ellen Glasgow has exposed the pretenses of middle class family life. Up to now, however, she has aimed more narrowly at the strictly Southern family. Her novels, like *They Stooped to Folly,* dealt with the genteel life of an older Virginia, in which ladies could still be "ruined" and gentlemen—to quote Miss Glasgow—"found it easier to commit adultery than to utter the word in a lady's presence." The author revealed plenty of tragedy in these hypocrisies, as much for the older generation that stifled in them as for the younger that broke its wings trying to get free. However, her wit was as strong as her pity and the comedy of manners usually triumphed over the tragedy.

In This Our Life is also laid in Queensborough, Va., but its family, the Timberlakes, might have lived almost anywhere. This is Queensborough on the eve of the second world war, when regional differences between middle class families have almost been eradicated. There are traces of the fictional Southern belle in one of the women but no more, I think, than in many fictional heroines of other regions. The enemies of the Timberlakes' happiness are not peculiar to the South. Asa, the father, suffers from economic insecurity, bondage to a hypochondriac wife, and enforced respect for rich, repulsive old Uncle William. Lavinia, who married Asa because "the time had come to marry somebody," escapes from dreariness into a dream world of "heart trouble" and self-identification with her bewitching younger daughter. The two girls, strangely named Stanley and Roy, are obvious contrasts. Stanley has "a right to happiness" and is very daring about taking it—until, running into trouble, she falls back hysterically on the protection of "family feeling." As for Roy, she is "so strong and brave" that she's not expected to mind too much when sister runs off with her husband. After all, as her mother reasons, if you tell a man he's free to leave you, you simply encourage him to go.

The family, as Miss Glasgow portrays it, is an institution which penalizes honesty and courage, protects the weak and predatory. But the latter do not escape either. For Stanley's selfishness drives her husband to suicide. And when, later, she accidentally kills a child with her car and tries to put the blame on a Negro boy, her father forces the truth from her. This is Asa's first rebellion against family feeling and he has to defy the entire family to carry it through. In the end, though, Stanley is protected anyway and manages, through the sympathy aroused by her predicament, to take Roy's fiance from her also. The novel ends with as frustrated, lonely, and hopeless a set of characters as I have ever encountered in fiction.

If this were a more powerful book, its indictment might have been a little sensational. It is not powerful, however. It is not even very well written. There is a jarring repetition of phrases and thoughts from Miss Glasgow's previous novels, and the characters never seem really important. Stanley is too vapid to be convincing even as a charmer. And Roy is a pale copy of Milly Burden, the "fallen" gal who refused to fall in *They Stooped to Folly.* There was direction and intelligence in Milly's defiance of the double sham of Eve and Mrs. Grundy. In Roy's case, integrity and courage end only in self-centered despair. The one advance Miss Glasgow has made in character portrayal is a welcome note of humility in her familiar "sympathetic" treatment of colored people.

Not only is the Glasgow wit missing from this book. So is the grave understanding, the warmth of sympathy which gave strength to *Barren Ground.* In her latest novel she seems almost to delight in stripping her characters of every possible support of moral or social values. In view of the sterile desolation in which she leaves them, it ill becomes Miss Glasgow to take deri[illegible]ittle cracks at radical beliefs as offering [illegible] solution of personal problems. For if this novel proves anything, it is that no "personal code" has any meaning whatsoever unless it is related to the hard, material facts of social existence. The desperate helplessness of Miss Glasgow's characters is epitomized by the remark of a lonely boy in the park that he wants to go to war because it will make him feel needed. This is a pretty dish of despair. It is a little surprising to find sections of the press which call for war as an expression of faith in American life, hailing a chronicle so devoid of faith as this.

BARBARA GILES.

Angell Rushes In

AMERICA'S DILEMMA: ALONE OR ALLIED, *by Norman Angell. Harper & Bros. $1.75.*

THIS has become one of the source books, the stock-in-trade of the aid-to-Britain crowd. Its arguments have been repeated *ad nauseam* over the air, and from the lips of all the mountebanks, Cabinet members, four-flushers, and minions of public opinion in our political life. Sir Norman writes persuasively. He grants in advance all of Britain's errors since Versailles, but rather cleverly, tries to enlist American support for Britain on the grounds that this war is not her di-

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lemma as much as it is ours. In return for participation in the war, Sir Norman invites our alliance with the British empire, an empire, incidentally, which is not what it used to be. One of his central arguments is that the empire has undergone a "most amazing deimperialization" in the last seventy-five years. By this theory, Sir Norman utterly discredits himself. It is just much too much to believe that the Tories who occupied Egypt in 1882, over-ran all of Africa, conquered the Boers in 1900, held Ireland down in 1916, annexed the Turkish empire in 1919, and fought to retain their hold on India ever since, were simply contributing to the dissolution of their empire! And our author ignores the fact that imperialist relations are not necessarily expressed in territorial holdings. You do not wave them away by the Statutes of Westminster: they are the very heart and basis of the capitalist way of life which has perpetuated a ghastly misery for the colonial peoples and brought a hideous war on the world twice in one generation. Reading this volume becomes irritating after a while. Why do we have to let this discredited traveling salesman repay our hospitality by further confusing the issues for the American people? There are enough fools among our own native liberals.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

Robert Dale Owen

THE INCORRIGIBLE IDEALIST, *by Elinor Pancoast & Anne E. Lincoln. The Principia Press, Inc. Bloomingdale, Ind. $2.*

A BIOGRAPHY of the amazing and indefatigable Robert Dale Owen, son of the Utopian socialist, has long been needed. While this book is not a definitive account, it is a step in the direction of drawing our attention to one of the most enlightened and liberal products of American society of the last century. Essentially a reformer who sought to institute democratic practices in a society rapidly coming under the control of trusts and corporations, Owen combined the humanitarian ideals of his father with a knack for practical politics and a convincing pen. He took part in the formation of the Workingmen's Party in New York City in 1829, agitated with the rationalist, Frances Wright, for women's rights, led in the demand for free public education, fought for Lincoln's policy of emancipation, and helped foster scientific research. He was always doing something, although his progressive instincts sometimes failed to function, as for example, when he approved the Fugitive Slave Law and favored the Mexican War.

The author's account of Owen is satisfactory as far as collecting the facts go, except that insufficient attention is paid the extremely interesting and important period of his connection with the working men's political movement of the late twenties and early thirties. There are also unfortunate gaps in the account of Owen's legislative career and

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in accounting for his thinking on agrarian problems.

The chief weakness of the book lies in the field of interpretation. The authors show a considerable disposition to excuse Owen's shortcomings, his willingness to engage in compromise by stressing his "powers of accommodation," and by making great point of his honesty and sincerity of purpose. It is by these latter standards that the principal evaluation of Owen is made, although the authors do not neglect to pay their respects to social and economic factors.

STEPHEN PEABODY.

Brief Reviews

THE GANG'S ALL HERE, *by Harvey Smith. Princeton University Press. $2.50.*

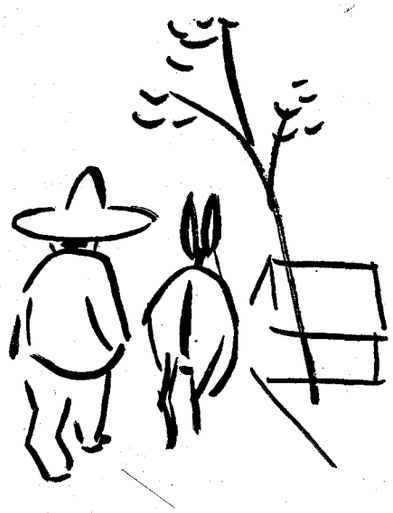
"THE Gang's All Here" is a slightly "New Deal" revelation of what graduates of one of the more orthodox colleges would be like if their lives since graduation were to be put candidly into print. This is what Tubby Rankin, secretary of the class which left Nostalgia University—which incidentally might be translated Harvard, Yale, or even Mr. Smith's own Alma Mater, Princeton—twenty-five years ago has done. Instead of the usual eulogistic biographical sketches found in class books he has presented what he sees through his liberal sense of humor. Here are social climbers, wolves-of-Wall-Street and perpetual college boys with their varied and comical forms of arrested development; old grads who live on past athletic glory; figures in success stories and suicides; those "upon whom assurance sits" and the henpecked ones. Along with his digs at a college system that seeks to rubberstamp its students even to selecting the kind of clothes they should wear, Tubby Rankin reveals also that most Nostalgians are Republicans politically and reactionary in their outlook; quite a few are proud of their economic royalism, and most are mildly anti-Semitic. Here too are victims of the depression years, the adjusted and unadjusted dispossessed; ne'er-do-wells, dead-beats and romantic bums. And although Mr. Smith prefers to place the burden of his attack upon the personal foibles of his characters, all-in-all "The Gang's all Here" makes pleasant reading.

CANADA FIGHTS: AN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AT WAR, *edited by John W. Dafoe. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.*

What makes Canada interesting is that one finds expressed there more clearly than anywhere else the peculiarity of the conflict between British and American imperialism today—namely, that it is proceeding under the cover of a most urgent cooperation. The reader who understands this fact will find this particular volume more useful than it would otherwise be. Prepared under the guidance of John W. Dafoe, the leading Canadian liberal and editor of the Winnipeg *Free Press,* this book is really a series of brochures, calculated to inform—and influence—the American public. A brief discussion of Canadian history and politics is followed by several passages describing the magnitude of Canada's war preparations. The concluding chapters consider Canada's future in Anglo-American relations. The informative passages are quite readable; the tone is rather frank, especially in dealing with the bad blood of Canadian-American relations in the past. One does not need to read it through to realize that this volume is a deliberate job: it is really a request that the United States bolster Canada's dislocated economy, and finance her "war effort." The authors repeat again and again that the Ottawa government insists upon full equality in relations with the colossus to the South; rather coyly, however, they suggest that since our national income is sixteen times Canada's, the United States ought to assume fifteen sixteenths the cost of "joint defense." The evasive discussion of what has happened to Canada's farmers, the concealment of the havoc to Canadian civil liberties, the silence on the hamstringing of Canadian labor, the failure to discuss the concentration of profit-making and the corruption in the war management, all this emphasizes the semi-official character of this volume.

CORNER DRUGGIST, *by Robert B. Nixon, Jr. Prentice-Hall. $2.50.*

Another in the series of old-time doctor-parson-newspaper-editor biographies. Through the windows of Robert Nixon's pharmacy one gets a variegated view of the forty years before and after the turn of the century, often amusing, sometimes appalling. Nixon was a rugged individualist who cherished a utopian socialist dream. He invented a coal substitute, and during the dye shortage in the first world war he evolved a substitute for German aniline dyes. He was unable to get even a hearing for either from the monopolies. And he never understood why. Unfortunately his son's book is a haphazard and anecdotal account of his father's life, with the author unable to go much beyond the father in understanding how his failure was typical of the small businessman in an era of giant corporations.



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MARC BLITZSTEIN'S ALBUM

"No For An Answer" finds permanence in its recording. The composer's stature as a craftsman. . . . The movies and theater. . . . "An audience of 40,000,000 children. . . ."

KEYNOTE Recordings have just issued an album of excerpts from Marc Blitzstein's *No For An Answer*. This remarkable opera made a deep impression last winter on the relatively small audience which saw it; it was one of the misfortunes of theater and musical history that no commercial producer would undertake to give it a wider hearing. For that reason alone these records are welcome.

The album includes music from the opening chorus, the soliloquy on the joys of "Penny Candy," the theme song, as well as the take-off on the Torch Singers, the haunting fox-trot known as "Secret Singing," the love scene between Joe and Francie, three vivid character sketches, plus "The Purest Kind of Guy." Chorus and cast are from the original company, with the exception of Joe, whose role has been taken by Michael Loring. The performance on wax reaches the same high levels as the three Sunday night performances at Mecca Temple. Except for some of the words in the choral section, which are hard to catch, the reproduction is clear. A booklet, supplied with the album, overcomes this difficulty.

I am impressed, listening to this music again and again, with Mr. Blitzstein's stature as a craftsman. More than that, he is a devastating satirist, a brilliant lyricist, dramatist, and composer all in one. These abilities represent a rare combination for one man; its results are projected with impressive power. To me, the final test lies in the audience-reaction. I recall two years of my own experience with a non-professional dramatic group which gave several dozen presentations of Mr. Blitzstein's *Cradle Will Rock* to every sort of audience. Invariably, that opera's cumulative impact was enough, in terms of applause, to tear the roof off.

Since its beginnings in the seventeenth century, the opera has attempted a marriage of all the arts: music, theater, poetry, dance, and even painting. More often than not, this attempt was ill-starred. The Italian operas of the last century considered librettos as a necessary evil, vehicles to bear all the more important arias. Taken by themselves, they were a ridiculous hodge-podge of language with little relation to the music. More and more, composers tried to achieve a greater unity of the various art forms. Weber and Liszt made important strides in this direction by writing their music to fit dramatic events on the stage. It was Wagner who went further than others, establishing a more significant relationship between the characters of the opera, the music, poetry, and supplementary dramatic effects. This made for continuity, for an organic unity which the opera had never previously enjoyed. Whatever one may think of the Wagnerian libretto, and it must be judged in its historical context, at least it bears an inseparable relation with its music.

Blitzstein has retained this vital aspect of the opera. But there are important differences. Wagner, it will be remembered, was part of his times, a period loosely described as "romantic." It was the era of the individual, when the thriving industrial classes of the nineteenth century inscribed on their banner the rights of the individual man. The bourgeois meant his own rights primarily, the rights of his class. But the creative artist expanded the concept to include the personal and human rights of every individual. Writings were concerned with the torment and striving to realize the dream of an ideal person. Siegfried, for example, is the perfect youth, flawless in body and mind. This preoccupation with the ideal resulted in an abstraction of characters: gods, devils, symbols, but never real people, with Moussorgsky the exception to the rule. Marc Blitzstein, on the other hand, deals with earthy folk, with real people, for he understands the relation of the individual to the collective. For this, new musical approaches were necessary. Wagner's music is continuous, and no lines are ever spoken. But such a technique becomes a real barrier to realism in style, and in the last decades, composers in our country and abroad have sought a natural fluidity between music and the spoken libretto. Blitzstein is perhaps the first to achieve real success in this effort. In the love scene between Joe and Francie, the latter does not sing at all, but speaks her lines in an easy conversational manner while Joe responds with a single, reiterated musical phrase. This interplay of music and dialogue brings out all the psychological nuances of the characterizations, quite impossible to achieve with the earlier musical techniques.

Blitzstein's musical sources are as manifold as his resources. He employs jazz frankly, as in "Fraught." He uses vaudeville tunes as in "Dimples." He handles the "blues" and the barbershop harmonies, without cramping his use of the most advanced musical formulas of our time. Rhythmically, he is extraordinarily flexible, as in "Make the Heart Be Stone." Harmonically, his structure is logical as it is original. Though never easy, his melodies are haunting, and deeply expressive, as in "Opening Chorus" and "Secret Singing."

All this notwithstanding, the net result might have been mediocre. But the gifted author of *No For An Answer* has expressed living struggle with rich, human characters. His is a fervent music that glows with unrivalled power, dignity, and affirmation. It is music which springs from the lives of little people "whose steady onward flow
insists on taking place
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LOU COOPER.

Children's Theater

The USSR's juvenile playgoers demand, and get, good drama.

Moscow.

AN AUDIENCE of 40,000,000 is the public for children's theaters in the Soviet Union. The first of these theaters was founded twenty years ago—a short period for the development of a new field of art. At least, however, when they first appeared they had the advantage of being untrammeled by tradition. To be sure, there were occasional performances for children in various cities and districts in Russia even before the Revolution. Generally these little plays were based on some favorite fairy tale. The stories were usually turned over for dramatization to playwrights none too talented or able. They were performed by actors who lacked sufficient ability to make a place for themselves in adult theater, and produced by directors who considered the whole thing a routine and dull assignment.

In the Soviet Union now the children's theaters are approached with an entirely different attitude. From the first, they were considered important both educationally and artistically. And during the first twenty years of experiment and hard thought, though there have been many setbacks, the experience has been invaluable. Today, a considerable number of productions for the children's theater are equal in quality and conception to the best in adult theater.

To begin with, children are an appreciative and responsive audience. They learn easily through the theater—which makes it all the more imperative that plays produced for them have content that is meaningful. The task of the theater is to mold the taste of the children, to cultivate their artistic appreciation, to sharpen their sensitivity to the poetic, to attune their ear to the best in music, to train their eye for pictorial beauty. The theater can do much in stimulating children's imagination, giving them new impetus for creative activity in every walk of life.

The first requisite in launching such a theater was to create a literature for it. There are a multitude of themes other than fairy

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tales that are important. But in general playwrights and authors showed little interest in the problem. Unduly frightened by the need for instructive material in play form, they misunderstood the possibilities of juvenile drama. The result was that most of the material was written by educators who may have had an excellent grasp of their subject, but who were not necessarily skilful in translating it into a form that would act well. The plays produced were better than nothing, but their artistic merit was certainly open to question. It was quite a while before the understanding became widespread that only art of excellence can exert significant educational influence. This was the first lesson of twenty years' work.

To underestimate the importance of the juvenile playgoer was a serious mistake. For a time the idea obtained that children's theaters could get away with more primitive productions, with over-simplified ideas and child characters cluttering up the stage. Today, however, the language of the juvenile stage is simple but not condescending, approaching the special audience in much the same way as the best plays approach adult audiences.

The differences between children's theater and the "grown-up" stage are confined to themes and content. There is no difference in treatment. Many children's theaters in the Soviet Union have staged productions that depict the world as it actually is, without gloss or falsification. Such productions stimulate thought and promote the mental and spiritual growth of the youthful audience.

Furthermore, though the characters presented in the children's theater are not the same as those in the adult theater, they are nevertheless acted in the same manner. Children have a very critical attitude. For example, an actress often plays a boy's role, but she had better be good, or the children will remain unconvinced and unsatisfied with the play. The depiction of child parts requires artistry, long experience, and a knowledge of the child's world. Nor should it be forgotten that the child's world changes from generation to generation, often at a rapid pace. It is necessary to have constant contact with the juvenile audience to understand the outlook and attitudes that must be considered in the theater. That is another important lesson gained in the twenty years.

Mention too should be made of repertoire. Dramatists producing largely for children's theater must be urged to depict characters taken not only from the near or distant past, but also—and perhaps to a greater extent than heretofore—from present-day life. A dearth of juvenile plays dealing with contemporary Soviet events has raised the demands for new writing, for comedies, and even musical plays.

Numerous problems of the children's theater are still unsolved, but the essential points have been settled. The most encouraging development in the Soviet Union has been the production of a good many plays of permanent artistic value. F. ILYIN.

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Tryout Production

Scenes from Ettore Rella's poetic drama, "Making Change."

SEVERAL unemployed actor friends of Ettore Rella—one of a small group of promising young men in whom the now defunct Group Theater was once interested—recently put on two scenes of his poetic drama, *Making Change*. It is a little difficult to form any accurate estimate of Mr. Rella's talent from these two scenes (directed by Benjamin Zemach and lit by Phil Brown). He is a young man in the theater; his writing possesses a distinctly literary—in contradistinction to dramatic—flavor. His work, as shown, is full of young mannerisms and cliched statements that lean heavily on stock characters and introspective examination. Yet he has a distinct flare for the stage.

An elaborate "synopsis" of his play was offered the invited audience, which served to confuse the reader even more than the two scenes that were ably projected by a score of extremely talented actors. The gist of the material, however, is distinctly American. Mr. Rella is interested in American working people, in this case men in a gold-mining camp in the far West. His subject matter comes directly out of American labor history, and his characters are intimately connected with the movement for the liberation of working men and women all over the world.

The two scenes shift from a bar and dance hall (that is really the blind for a brothel) to the mind of the chief protagonist, Barney. In the first scene, the treatment is largely realistic; the second scene involves experimentation with lighting, sound effect, and stylized acting intended to convey the sense of Barney's inner conflict. He is attempting to evaluate his life, to give it some shape and meaning. He is faced with unemployment and an emotional conflict of a major nature. He reviews the outstanding events of his life in an effort toward self-clarification that will only lead, it seems, to further personal frustration.

As revealed in these two scenes, Mr. Rella's talent is largely unformed, and still suffering from a confusion of motives. His use of naturalistic speech side by side with the most effulgent sort of pseudo-poetry, his groping for articulation, which is as poignant as that of his characters, argue for a long period of hard work before he can successfully express the very real emotions that he evidences in almost every line of his dialogue. For despite crudities of motivation, of dramatization, and of projection, Rella possesses unusual sensi-

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bility, vitality, and genuine passion. He will make a writer, but whether for the stage or for the printed page it is difficult, from this fragmentary work, to tell.

Characteristic of the emotion he is able to convey was the sincerity of the performance provided by a cast of young men and women. Especially commendable were the performances of Art Smith and Ruth Nelson (as Barney and his blowsy paramour who keeps the dance hall). Both these people are among our most accomplished performers. Paquita Anderson played a dual role with distinction, and the immigrant miner of Harry Davis was a creative act of more than usual power and intelligence.

Mr. Rella is a man to watch. He possesses imagination, honesty, and a genuine understanding of the little people who are the salt of this particular earth.

ALVAH BESSIE.

"Lady from Cheyenne"

How Wyoming women first got the vote —as Hollywood tells it.

WYOMING was once full of crude, very bad men, but according to *Lady from Cheyenne,* all that was changed by the suffragettes. Historians cannot tell how it came about, says the film's prefatory note—nor, adds Columbia Pictures coyly, can Hollywood. Therefore, the field is wide open. On the theory that if history cannot be defaced beyond recognition, or ignored, it might be laughed to death, the following sociological note is now being propounded at the Roxy.

Loretta Young, ignorant of the facts of life, is a young school teacher who mystifies both cast and audience by popping up in a tough frontier town. She doesn't like the head bad man, so she decides to collect a jury of women to get him locked up. Miss Young discovers that only voters can be jurors, and then she finds out that women can't vote. So she becomes a suffragette, and in no time at all is on her way to the state legislature with a draft of a bill to extend the franchise to women. She is stymied in her efforts to get the bill introduced, and life is very dark until she is taken in hand by some ladies of easy virtue. From then on the cause is safe. Our heroine meets the governor and tells him he has a fine beard. Apparently out of gratitude, he tells her how to get the bill passed, and that is how, half a reel later, the legislature of Cheyenne became one of the first law-making bodies of America to go on record in favor of woman suffrage.

Lady from Cheyenne has smooth direction, by Frank Lloyd, and fortunately it moves quickly. Its comedy, however, is on a par with its historical intelligence. A good cast that includes Frank Craven, Robert Preston, Gladys George, and Edward Arnold work very hard with their lines but the film remains prostrate to the very end.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

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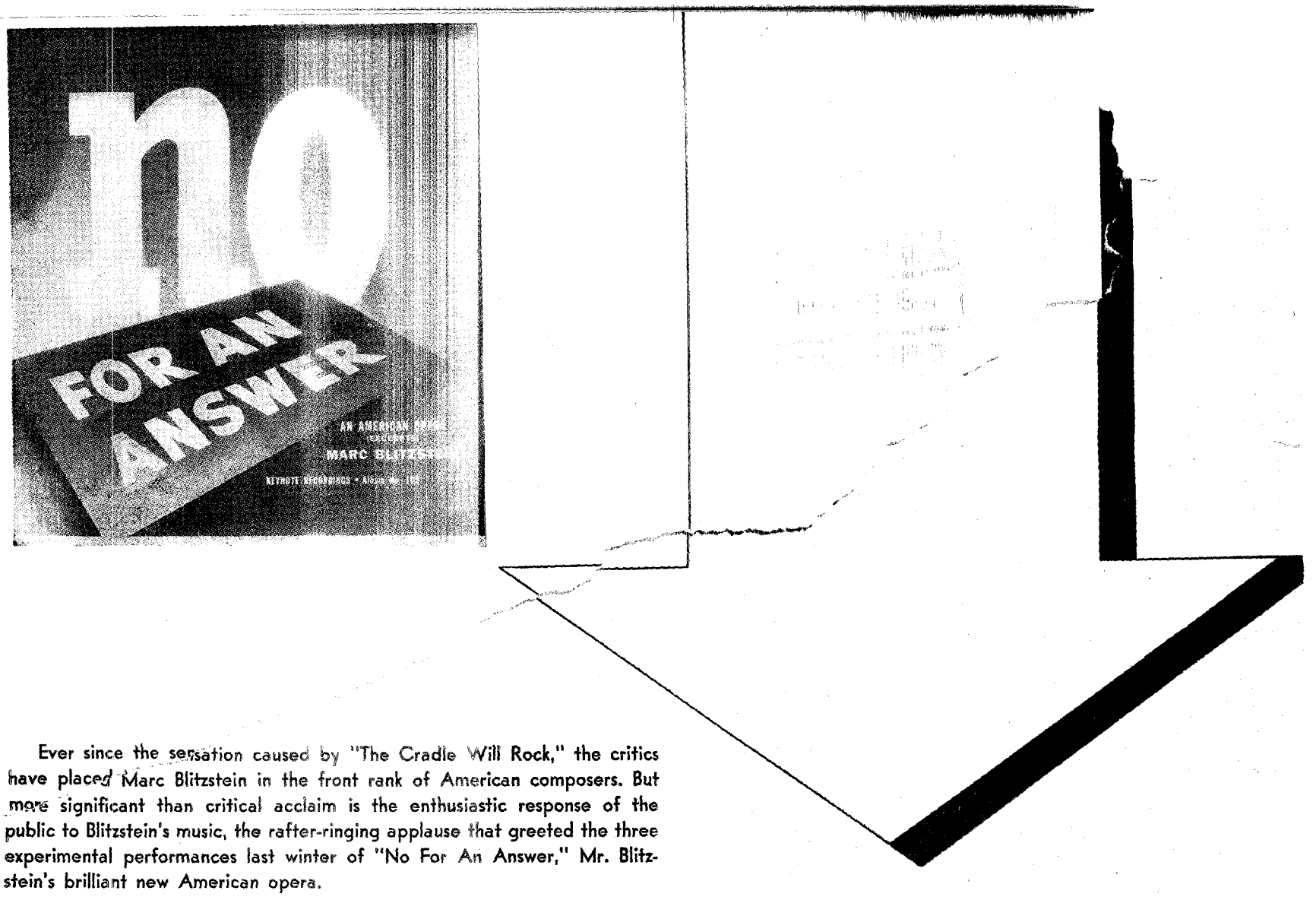

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